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The situation in Afghanistan

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The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/11 and Security Council resolution 2145 (2014), in which I was requested to report every three months on developments in Afghanistan.

2. The report provides an update on the activities of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including significant humanitarian, development and human rights efforts, since the issuance of my previous report of 9 December 2014 (A/69/647-S/2014/876). It also provides a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan. The annex contains an assessment of progress made towards benchmarks and indicators since the issuance of my report of 7 March 2014 (A/68/789-S/2014/163), in line with Security Council resolution 1868 (2009).

II. Relevant developments

3. Following the agreement of 21 September 2014 to establish a national unity Government by President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, new Ministers assumed the roles of Foreign Affairs, Interior Affairs and Finance, among others, while discussions continued on remaining appointments. The discussions on the reform agenda outlined at the London Conference on 4 December continued between the Government and its international partners. The passage of the national budget provided the framework for promoting socioeconomic stability. Increased emphasis on regional dialogue resulted in a series of developments in the areas of trade and security cooperation. Efforts by the Government of Afghanistan

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to initiate a sustainable dialogue on peace and reconciliation were stepped up, albeit with limited progress. The security transition to Afghan forces formally concluded on 31 December 2014 at the end of the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The volatility of the security situation continued to be reflected in the growing human cost of the conflict in terms of civilian casualties and population displacements throughout the year.

A. Political developments

4. The formation process of the national unity Government dominated the reporting period. President Ghani introduced a number of interim measures to ensure continuity in governance until appointments were finalized. On 1 December 2014, a presidential decree was issued stating that Provincial Governors and Provincial Chiefs of Police retained their posts in an "acting" capacity while all sitting Ministers were removed and Deputy Ministers temporarily assumed those positions. On 13 December, a presidential decree was issued that set forth the duties and authorities of the Chief Executive, including chairing the Council of Ministers, following up on resolutions of the Cabinet, providing policy and reform advice to the President and proposing appointments and dismissals of high-level officials. On 20 January 2015, a presidential decree specified the committees and institutions that the President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President and Special Representative of the President on Reforms and Good Governance would each oversee. During the reporting period, President Ghani visited all provinces to review the situation first-hand, and reshuffled leadership positions in a number of provinces, including Farah, Herat and Kunduz.

5. On 20 January, President Ghani introduced 25 nominees to the lower house of the National Assembly for ministerial positions and candidates to head the Central Bank and the National Directorate of Security. Of the former, 13 were nominated by the President and 12 by the Chief Executive, among them three women. President Ghani had previously announced that no former Ministers or current Members of Parliament would be considered, meaning that the nominees consisted of a number of new political faces. A total of nine candidates either withdrew or were rejected by the lower house during the review process. On 28 January, 19 nominees, including 2 replacement nominees, were put to a vote. As a result, the following nine appointments were confirmed: the head of the National Directorate of Security and eight Ministers (Foreign Affairs, Interior Affairs, Finance, Public Health, Refugee and Repatriation, Mines and Petroleum, Rural Rehabilitation and Development and Haj and Awqaf). The remaining 10 were rejected, including the only woman candidate. As a consequence, Acting Ministers continued in 17 roles and an acting governor stayed on at the Central Bank.

6. The potential date for Parliamentary and District Council elections, as well as electoral reform, have yet to be determined. According to the Constitution, Parliamentary elections are mandated from 30 to 60 days before 21 June 2015. District Council elections have never been held. On 27 January, the Chair of the Independent Election Commission publicly proposed 3 October 2015 to hold both sets of elections. The lower house of the National Assembly discussed amendments to the Law on Structure, Duties and Authorities of the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission, but did not

vote on the matter prior to its winter recess on 28 January. The proposed amendments included the appointments mechanism for electoral management bodies, the terms of commissioners and key secretariat positions, the duration of the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission and the lines of accountability for those institutions. On 5 February, President Ghani released a press statement reiterating his commitment to electoral reform and tasked Second Vice-President Mohammad Sarwar Danish to identify areas for improvement with the Commission and civil society. Two days later, Vice-President Danish told election observation groups that the Electoral Reform Commission would soon be formed in accordance with the agreement to form a national unity Government.

7. Under the Constitution, the upper house of the National Assembly consists of one third who are nominees of the President, one third who are elected by Provincial Councils from among their own membership and one third who are members of District Councils. On 10 January, President Ghani swore in 32 new Senators to the upper house from their respective Provincial Councils, with the exception of Khost and Uruzgan, who had not selected their representatives at that time. On the same day, Provincial Council representatives who had been temporarily serving in the vacant District Council seats in the upper house were requested to vacate the seats until such time that District Council elections take place. The 34 nominees appointed to the upper house during President Hamid Karzai's tenure remain in place.

8. On 28 January, the lower house of the National Assembly passed an amendment to the Provincial Councils Law, removing oversight powers of the Councils over the local Government departments. In protest, 32 of the 34 Provincial Councils closed their offices. President Ghani has since met with the Chairpersons of the Provincial Councils and has tasked the Independent Directorate for Local Governance to recommend new amendments to be introduced to the National Assembly that create mutual accountability between the Provincial Councils and the local authorities.

9. President Ghani has placed considerable emphasis on achieving national reconciliation through a formal Afghan-led process in which he foresees a role for the traditional jirgas. He has welcomed and stressed the potential role of China in support of the Afghan peace process. In reaction, a 14 January statement published on the Taliban's website stated that the movement "wanted peace" provided its preconditions are met. Those include the end of the foreign military presence, the establishment of an Islamic government and the implementation of Sharia law. On 27 January, the Taliban issued a statement clarifying that a recent visit by its representatives to Beijing was not an effort to seek a mediation role for China.

10. In promoting a rights-based approach to a durable peace process, the Afghan People's Dialogue on Peace held a national conference in Kabul on 15 January. That marked the completion of the second phase of the Dialogue, an inclusive civil society-led peace initiative conducted over the past three years with the facilitation of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) that engaged 6,000 Afghans in identifying local drivers of conflict and developing local road maps for peace. On 26 January, the head of the joint secretariat of the High Peace Council met women members of Provincial Peace Committees from 15 provinces to discuss means of accelerating peace efforts in their respective provinces. The joint

secretariat of the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme reported that a total of 1,716 individuals had joined the Programme in 2014.

B. Security

11. The security transition was formally completed on 31 December 2014. On 28 December, in Kabul, a ceremony was held to mark the conclusion of International Security Assistance Force operations. Afghan forces assumed full responsibility for security and the new NATO-led Resolute Support Mission commenced. As set forth in Security Council resolution 2189 (2014), the new NATO non-combat, training, advisory and assistance operation will work in close coordination with the Government of Afghanistan and will initially operate from Kabul and four regional locations: Kandahar, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Jalalabad.

12. The security situation in Afghanistan remained volatile. The United Nations continued to monitor security-related events relevant to the work, mobility and safety of civilians across the country and having an impact on the delivery of United Nations-mandated activities and programmes. In 2014 there were 22,051 recorded incidents, which surpassed those of 2013 by 10 per cent. In terms of incidents recorded over the past 13 years, 2014 was the second-highest, after 2011. Of those incidents, 68 per cent were recorded in southern, south-eastern and eastern regions, with Nangarhar Province being the most volatile and recording 13 per cent of the incidents. Armed clashes and improvised explosive devices accounted for 76 per cent of total incidents, an increase of 11 per cent from 2013. The use of suicide attacks accounted for fewer than 1 per cent of all incidents recorded, though the 158 recorded attacks in 2014 represented a 47 per cent increase compared with 2013; 31 were in Kabul, compared with 18 in 2013. The Afghan National Security Forces took countermeasures to thwart the efforts of anti-Government elements to challenge control of a number of key districts and significantly disrupt the elections held in April and June 2014. However, the rise in the overall number of security incidents recorded indicates a mounting challenge to the Afghan security forces from insurgent groups. Unconfirmed reports of significant casualties among anti-Government elements and Afghan forces points to the increasingly attritional nature of the conflict. That has been particularly evident in areas such as Badakhshan, Kunduz, Hilmand, Nangarhar, Kunar and Nuristan Provinces, which are also closely associated with illicit economic activity, notably illegal narcotics production and trafficking.

13. Between 16 November 2014 and 15 February 2015, 5,075 security-related incidents were recorded across the country by the United Nations. That represented a 10.6 per cent increase against the same period in 2013/2014 and a 33.2 per cent increase against the same period in 2012/2013. The continuing high level of security incidents is partially attributed to an increase in anti-Government element activities, especially during the November and December 2014 period. The months of December 2014 and January 2015 also witnessed the highest number of security incidents when compared with the same period each year since 2001. That is attributed in part to a relatively mild winter that has allowed all parties in the conflict to continue to conduct operations. The Afghan security forces initiated extensive clearance operations in Kunduz and Hilmand over the winter to respond to insurgent activity. Afghan security forces also continued operations in Faryab, Herat, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Kunar Provinces to counter insurgent groups who

continued to contest control of the areas over the winter rather than withdraw until the spring offensive commences. Following the spike in insurgent activity in Kabul during October and November 2014, operations by the Afghan security forces supported by the international military contributed to reducing the number of high-profile insurgent operations in the capital, resulting in a decrease of suicide attacks from 10 during October and November to 5 during December and January. Decreases were also recorded in Kabul for the improvised explosive device attacks, from 18 in the October to November period to 5 in December and 2 in January.

14. During the reporting period there were also more than 50 demonstrations country-wide, nearly all of which were peaceful, in response to the publication of cartoons considered to be blasphemous to Islam. Consistent with previous trends, armed clashes continued to account for the majority of security incidents at 46.8 per cent, followed by improvised explosive devices at 30.9 per cent. Targeted killings continued at a high level. From 16 November 2014 to 15 February 2015, 191 assassinations and 40 attempted assassinations were recorded, representing 26.4 per cent and 29.0 per cent increases respectively against the same period in 2013/2014. A major spike in suicide attacks was also recorded: a total of 40 suicide attacks, compared with 35 in the same three-month period in 2013/2014. On 29 January, an improvised explosive device killed an Afghan local police commander in Laghman Province and a follow-up suicide attack on the commander's funeral held on the same day resulted in the death of 15 people, including a number of senior local Afghan security force personnel, and 34 reported casualties. On 12 February, a member of the High Peace Council, Haji Sherin Agha, was assassinated by unknown gunmen as he attended prayers in a mosque in Kandahar.

15. During the reporting period, there was speculation in the media about the presence of groups linked to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). A handful of Afghan and Pakistani Taliban commanders are confirmed to have declared allegiance to ISIL and an increasing number of commanders are reportedly seeking funding from and considering cooperation with ISIL. There is no indication of widespread or systematic support for or accommodation of ISIL in Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan has indicated the seriousness with which the threat of ISIL is being taken and its intent to curb the growth of the group in the country. The principal security challenges from insurgent groups remain the Afghan Taliban and other experienced insurgent entities, notably the Haqqani Network, the armed faction of Hezb-e Islami Gulbuddin, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan affiliates and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, particularly in the east of the country.

16. During the reporting period, 25 incidents recorded were either directly or indirectly against the United Nations. The majority of incidents were criminal acts directed towards national staff, including six cases of intimidation and one case of abduction. Seven United Nations road missions came under attack during the period in Khost, Laghman and Jalalabad Provinces on 3 and 17 December and 14 January respectively and in Herat Province on 11, 18 and 29 January and 2 February. No United Nations casualties were reported in any of the incidents.

C. Regional cooperation

17. The new administration continued to actively work to enhance regional engagement. That was manifest in a series of visits to and from neighbouring

countries and establishing cooperation agreements, such as the one signed during President Ghani's January visit to the United Arab Emirates in mid-January, when the Enduring Strategic Partnership Agreement was concluded between the two nations. On 20 January 2015, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran visited Kabul. Among other issues, the Afghan leadership discussed security cooperation and a proposed bilateral strategic cooperation agreement. That visit was preceded by the 15 December 2014 signing in Tehran of a Memorandum of Understanding by the commander of the Iranian Border Guards and his Afghan counterpart to enhance cooperation in countering terrorism and drug trafficking. During President Ghani's visit to Turkmenistan in late January he discussed with President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline and the creation of the Afghanistan-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey "Lapis Lazuli" transport corridor, and concluded a Memorandum of Understanding on the further development of cooperation in the area of electric power, a programme of cooperation between their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs and supplementary agreements on several electricity supply contracts.

18. Afghanistan and Pakistan continued to intensify efforts to improve security cooperation. On 17 December, the Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan visited Kabul to discuss security coordination. That was followed by a tripartite meeting in Pakistan on 23 December of the Army Chief of Afghanistan, the commander of the International Security Assistance Force and the Pakistani Chief of Army Staff. On 11 January 2015, the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence Chief met with President Ghani in Kabul. Outcomes included agreements to reopen the Joint Border Coordination Centres at the Torkham and Spin Boldak crossing points and for coordinated counter-terrorism operations along the shared frontier. Exchanges also took place between legislators, with an Afghan delegation participating in the 31 December 2014 Afghanistan-Pakistan parliamentary security dialogue in Islamabad. In turn, on 9 January 2015 a delegation of Pakistani political party officials discussed counter-terrorism cooperation and border security with senior officials in Kabul. On the economic front, in early January the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Coordination Authority met in Islamabad to review the status of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement and discussed its expansion to form a Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan Trilateral Transit Trade Agreement.

19. On 9 February, the first round of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue was held in Kabul. The parties discussed the peace and security situation in the region, as well as the need to deepen trilateral cooperation in counter-terrorism and security. Both China and Pakistan pledged to support the Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process. In support of multilateral engagement, Chief Executive Abdullah represented Afghanistan at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's Thirteenth Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government in Astana on 14 and 15 December 2014. The meeting's joint communiqué stressed the importance of regional cooperation in the areas of trade, transport and energy, including with observer States. On 29 January 2015, Kabul hosted a seminar entitled "Regional Radicalization, Causes and Solutions", an activity of the counter-terrorism confidence-building measure of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process.

20. On 29 January, the International Contact Group on Afghanistan met in Abu Dhabi to consider economic, security and political events in Afghanistan. As part of continued regional engagement, from 8 to 10 February, my Special Representative

visited Uzbekistan and held discussions with senior Uzbek officials that included the regional dimensions of counter-narcotics and broader issues of regional security and stability.

III. Human rights

21. On 18 February 2015, UNAMA released its annual report for 2014 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The report documented 10,548 civilian casualties (3,699 killed and 6,849 injured) in 2014, the highest number since UNAMA began documenting civilian casualties in 2009 and marking a 22 per cent increase in civilian casualties compared with 2013. Some 72 per cent of civilian casualties were attributed to anti-Government elements, 14 per cent to pro-Government forces (12 per cent to Afghan National Security Forces and 2 per cent to international military forces) and 10 per cent to unattributed cross-fire between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements. Explosive remnants of war accounted for 3 per cent of civilian casualties (422 casualties, 124 killed and 298 injured), a 20 per cent increase compared with 2013. Ground engagements between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements remained the leading cause of civilian casualties, accounting for 3,605 civilian casualties (1,092 killed and 2,513 injured), followed by improvised explosive devices, accounting for 2,978 civilian casualties (925 killed and 2,053 injured).

22. Between 16 November 2014 and 14 February 2015, UNAMA documented 2,068 civilian casualties (730 killed and 1,338 injured), reflecting a sharp increase of 25 per cent from the same period in 2013/2014. Some 71 per cent of civilian casualties were attributed to anti-Government elements, 16 per cent to pro-Government forces (15 per cent to Afghan National Security Forces and 1 per cent to international military forces) and 7 per cent to unattributed cross-fire between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements. Approximately 5 per cent of civilian casualties, resulting mostly from explosive remnants of war, could not be attributed. Ground engagements continued to be the leading cause of civilian casualties, accounting for 556 civilian casualties (174 deaths and 382 injured), followed by improvised explosive devices. On 13 December 2014, anti-Government elements killed 11 de-miners and injured 6 others in Wa Sher District, Hilmand Province. Civilian casualties by pro-Government forces included an incident on 31 December in Sangin District, Hilmand Province, in which the Afghan National Army fired three mortar rounds from a check post that impacted on a civilian house where a wedding was under way, causing 83 civilian casualties (29 killed and 54 injured). The Government announced an investigation with the results pending at the time of reporting.

23. The United Nations-led country task force on monitoring and reporting on children and armed conflict documented 514 child casualties (155 killed and 359 injured) in 204 incidents between 16 November 2014 and 14 February 2015. Most child casualties were caused during ground engagements between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements (185 casualties), followed by explosive remnants of war (99 casualties) and improvised explosive devices attacks (95 casualties). Children were especially vulnerable in the southern region of the country, which witnessed 28 per cent of the total child casualties reported. Anti-Government elements were responsible for 51 per cent of the total child casualties, while pro-Government forces were responsible for 24 per cent and

unattributed incidents were the cause of 25 per cent of casualties. Child casualties decreased by 19 per cent compared with the previous reporting period.

24. The Government made significant progress in implementing its "road map towards compliance", a 15-point targeted plan aimed at expediting implementation of the Action plan for the prevention of underage recruitment of 2011. On 13 December 2014, the upper house of the National Assembly approved a draft presidential decree criminalizing underage recruitment by Afghan security forces, which President Ghani endorsed on 2 February 2015. United Nations advocacy with legislators and Ministry of Justice representatives contributed to the approval of the decree.

25. To mark the annual 16-day campaign of global activism to end gender violence, held from 25 November to 10 December 2014, the United Nations supported outreach activities across the country, hosting debates, radio programmes and workshops that raised awareness of the urgent need to address violence against Afghan women and girls. UNAMA organized events in 13 provinces that engaged more than 400 Afghans, including 190 women, aimed at promoting greater understanding of legal guarantees that protect women from violence. To coincide with the launch of the campaign, on 25 November, the Government published its second report on the status of the implementation of the Elimination of Violence Against Women law. The report's findings were based on 5,406 cases of violence against women registered by the Government and noted a 20 per cent increase in the overall registration of cases of violence against women compared with the previous report. Of the 5,406 cases, 3,715 were registered under the Elimination of Violence Against Women law, with battery and laceration remaining the most prevalent registered acts of violence against women. The report noted a significant increase in registered cases of murder and underage marriage, and that mediation remained the most common method of settling cases of violence against women.

26. Following issuance of Presidential Decree No. 39 of 2 January 2015 on the commutation and amnesty of the punishment of juveniles and prisoners, the Government released at least 144 women and girls detained for moral crimes. The United Nations has repeatedly raised concerns over the illegal practice of arresting and prosecuting women who leave their homes for what are termed moral crimes, including charging them with the intention to commit adultery, which is not a crime under Afghan law.

27. On 25 February 2015, UNAMA released its third major report on the treatment of conflict-related detainees in Afghan custody. The report found that despite Government efforts in 2013 and 2014 to address torture and ill-treatment of conflict-related detainees by officials of the National Directorate of Security, the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army, particularly through implementation of a February 2013 presidential decree, torture and ill-treatment of detainees persisted. UNAMA found that one third (278) of the 790 detainees it interviewed across the country experienced torture or ill-treatment on arrest or in numerous detention facilities of the Afghan security forces. While the incidence of torture and ill-treatment among detainees interviewed decreased by 14 per cent compared with the findings of the January 2013 report by UNAMA, the February 2015 report stressed that increased efforts were needed to end and prevent torture by Afghan officials in compliance with the Government's obligations under Afghan and international law. The report found a pervasive lack of accountability for

perpetrators of torture and observed that continuing impunity for torture enabled torture to continue. UNAMA called on the Government to establish a national preventive mechanism on torture that would include independent inspectors, civilian oversight and the referral of perpetrators for prosecution and disciplinary action. In response to the report, the Government announced a national action plan to eliminate torture that includes regulatory reforms, deterrence measures and comprehensive training programmes.

IV. Implementation of the Kabul Process and the coordination of development assistance

28. On 4 December 2014, Afghanistan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland co-chaired the London Conference on Afghanistan, at which partner countries, international financial institutions and multilateral and non-governmental organizations renewed commitments to support the country's progress towards security and stability in the "Transformation Decade", and the new administration presented its reform plans. Conference participants welcomed the reform plan to address corruption, governance and human rights concerns, and it was agreed to update the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework accordingly at a Senior Officials Meeting to be held later in 2015. In that regard, the Government is preparing an action plan for implementing the priorities outlined in its conference paper.

29. The London Conference on Afghanistan commitments to reducing the country's dependence on external support were made in a context of limited economic growth. At the conference, the World Bank reported that economic growth had declined sharply from the average annual rate of 9.4 per cent from 2003 to 2012, to 3.7 per cent in 2013 and 1.5 per cent in 2014. The economic slowdown contributed to an overall decline in Government revenues, constraining operations and potentially exacerbating future fiscal gaps, which are projected to persist into the Transformation Decade. The International Monetary Fund continued to encourage reforms, including in the banking sector, to increase the country's prospects for promoting trade and commerce, which are priorities of the new administration. Despite those challenges, the Government ended the 1393 (2014) fiscal year with a positive cash balance, which the Ministry of Finance attributed to donor contributions following the Government's October 2014 request for assistance to close the fiscal gap. Following discussions with the International Monetary Fund, the Government revised its initial draft of the 1394 (2015) fiscal year budget, making adjustments that included lowering revenue projections. The lower house of the National Assembly approved the document on 28 January 2015. The enacted budget allows ongoing Government-funded development projects to continue, but approved no new discretionary initiatives for 2015. As a result, some donor contributions made in response to the October 2014 request by the Government included funds that had previously been budgeted for development initiatives. Operating expenditures, including security costs, are budgeted to increase this year.

30. The Government continued to prioritize efforts to address corruption, including the follow-up on the collapse of the Kabul Bank to improve recovery of the Bank's assets and clarifying the division of labour among the anti-corruption

institutions. In support of improved anti-corruption activities, the Government issued an administrative order to remove the duplication of functions among key State anti-corruption institutions, including the High Office of Oversight, the Supreme Audit Office and the Attorney General's Office, and to separate policy support functions from monitoring and oversight responsibilities. In addition, the Government continued the oversight role of the Independent Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, including the latter's monitoring of anti-corruption measures in government institutions. During the reporting period, the Government initiated new reform processes in the Customs and Revenue Departments to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the revenue collection process and to reduce corruption in the system. Afghanistan also continued its progress through the review process of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, led by the High Office of Oversight.

31. The new Government has prioritized the strengthening of its partnership with civil society. In that context, civil society has, since the London Conference on Afghanistan, continued to organize to engage more effectively with the Government and key stakeholders on issues of national development. The Afghan Institute for Civil Society was established in mid-January 2015 to certify Afghan civil society organizations that have received requisite standardized capacity-building training that adheres to internationally accepted standards and locally appropriate values and principles in their work.

32. At the London Conference, Afghanistan included the restoration of public confidence in justice institutions and ensuring the rule of law among its priority areas. Supreme Court Chief Justice Rasheed Rashid has commenced steps to reinforce the Government's commitment to reform, including a comprehensive review of the credentials of all judicial staff with the purpose of ensuring that the staff are qualified. The Supreme Court has also established the Special Court for Ministers as required by the Constitution, to review indictments of seven former ministers for corruption and financial crimes submitted by the Attorney General's Office.

33. On 9 December 2014, the Ministry of Interior Affairs approved the formal establishment of the Police Women Councils following its initial pilot phase. A code of conduct for the Councils was formulated by the Ministry's Department of Gender, Human Rights and Children with technical support from the United Nations. Following the approval, country-wide expansion of the initiative took place with the establishment of eight new councils, with the initiative now established in 17 provinces. In addition, efforts to promote community-based policing practices in line with the Ministry's 10-year vision continued. Formal consultations between the Afghan National Police and communities, supported by the United Nations, resulted in agreements being signed by police and community representatives in 19 districts across five provinces to implement community-based policing approaches.

34. On 13 January 2015, the Central Statistics Organization launched a report on the first sociodemographic and economic survey results for Kabul Province. The survey is supported with technical assistance by the United Nations and is being expanded across the provinces to provide more reliable population and socioeconomic data to guide policy and planning activities in lieu of a nationwide census.

35. On 18 January, the Ministry of Youth Affairs, together with the United Nations, launched the first ever National Youth Policy for Afghanistan, which was developed with United Nations support. Prior to this, on 9 December 2014, the "State of Afghanistan Youth Report" was launched by the Ministry of Youth Affairs. The report focused on the country's demographic youth bulge and strategic areas for investment in order for the country to benefit from its growing population.

36. During the reporting period, the United Nations country team embarked on a series of measures to reinforce the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2015-2019 and strengthen their commitments to the "United Nations working together" approach. Foremost among the changes adopted in December were measures to harmonize and streamline procurement procedures and set up a cash transfer system. Integrated annual work plans detailing the United Nations programmes and budgets will form the basis for a comprehensive portfolio review of all United Nations activities undertaken since 2012. In addition, during the reporting period both the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Population Fund country programmes for 2015-2019, which are aligned to the priorities of the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, were agreed with the Government.

V. Humanitarian assistance

37. A sharp increase in voluntary returns to Afghanistan has been reported since the start of 2015. As at 31 January, 22,309 individuals spontaneously returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, including registered refugees and undocumented Afghans. That is the highest figure recorded for the month of January since 2003 and is approximately equivalent to the total for the whole of 2014. The majority of families are returning from the Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab areas and have resided there for an average of 15 to 25 years. Returning families have reported incidences of coercion and harassment, as well as home and workplace raids, with many of those interviewed stating that returning to Afghanistan was the only viable option. As at 31 January, 1,472 Afghans were also deported in that month, compared with 3,754 in 2014. The return of registered Afghan refugees declined by 56 per cent, to 16,957 persons returning in 2014. The decrease in 2014 was attributed in part to uncertainty regarding the elections and concerns about security in the transition period, but primarily concerns about limited employment opportunities in Afghanistan. However, the declining trend has been reversed since the start of 2015. During the month of January 2015, 3,317 Afghan refugees were assisted in returning to Afghanistan, representing a 90 per cent increase in comparison with January 2014. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has intensified its advocacy for the respect of asylum space and the voluntary character of return.

38. Large-scale cross-border population movements continue as a result of military operations in the North Waziristan Agency of Pakistan. As at 31 January 2015, UNHCR had assessed 42,008 refugee families in Khost and Paktika Provinces since mid-June 2014. The majority are living with host families, with 8,065 families living in the Gulan camp in Khost Province. In Paktika, additional displacement was reported at the end of January. The figures indicate a continuing influx of refugees and as a result humanitarian agencies will need to continue to respond to both

emergency needs for new arrivals as well as longer term protection, social and economic concerns.

39. As at 31 January, the Task Force on Internally Displaced Persons, co-chaired by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and UNHCR, recorded 12,754 persons displaced in Afghanistan owing to conflict since the start of 2015. Overall, 156,193 conflict-displaced individuals were recorded in Afghanistan in 2014, representing an 8 per cent increase compared with 2013 and bringing the total number of internally displaced persons profiled in Afghanistan to 805,409 at the end of 2014. During January 2015, around 3,000 individuals were displaced in the southern region, largely from Hilmand and Uruzgan Provinces to Kandahar Province and Kandahar urban areas. Increased displacement was also recorded in the northern region, where around 3,500 individuals were displaced, particularly in the Kunduz area, and in the central region, where around 3,500 individuals were displaced. Displacements continue to be attributed to ongoing conflict between the Afghan National Army and armed non-state actors, harassment by armed non-state actors and general insecurity. The Government of Afghanistan showed a renewed commitment towards finding solutions to the long-standing internal displacement, in line with its internally displaced persons policy adopted in November 2013.

40. During the reporting period, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations with the National Disaster Management Committee and the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority continued to provide assistance to vulnerable communities across the country following the onset of the winter period. In the north and north-east, an estimated 12,300 people were assisted with children's clothing, blankets and tarpaulins. Prior to the onset of winter, the shelter cluster reported that, as at 31 December, 83 per cent of shelters funded as part of the response to severe flooding in the north of the country in the first half of the year were completed. Assistance to informal settlements in Kabul by humanitarian agencies to date includes support to 7,904 families with two months of emergency food rations and to 6,617 families with fuel assistance. In Khost and Paktika Provinces, a total of 23,326 refugee families have received winter assistance packages. The food cluster will continue distributions of wheat, flour, vegetable oil, pulses, salt and high-energy biscuits throughout the winter. Nearly 340,000 beneficiaries have received assistance to date, despite only 35 per cent of the planned pre-positioned supplies being available owing to a funding shortfall. The health cluster pre-positioned basic medical supplies and medicines to support an estimated 1.9 million people in 116 districts living in 24 provinces. In addition, with support from the Common Humanitarian Fund, temporary health clinics have been established for communities that are isolated during the winter period.

41. In 2014, mine action partners, coordinated by the United Nations, cleared 1,015 minefields and 63 battlefields in 392 communities, resulting in 117 districts being declared mine-free. Despite those significant gains, limited funding meant that the sector did not meet its 2014 target for clearance operations, as set out in the 10-year workplan of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. It is estimated that 3,912 minefields and 248 battlefields remain, affecting 1,596 communities across 258 districts and 33 provinces. The remaining ordnance hampers freedom of movement, curtails agricultural activity and slows economic growth. The United Nations is also addressing contamination resulting from International Security Assistance Force operations by working with the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission to coordinate the clearance of former international military bases and firing

ranges. As at the end of January 2015, 324.6 km^2 of firing ranges had been cleared and approximately 67,400 explosive items and 14,150 items of small arms ammunition removed or destroyed. Of the 102 former International Security Assistance Force ranges to be cleared, the United States of America is responsible for 84 and is ahead of schedule for clearing them by December 2015. Progress has also been made on the issue of unrecorded, post-2001 contamination, with dialogue between stakeholders initiated and funds raised for surveys that will help address the problem.

42. During the reporting period, the Government of Afghanistan and UNICEF signed the largest ever country programme plan of action for 2015-2019 for a total of $665 million. It is to provide children, especially those in hard-to-reach areas, with greater access to services, including health, nutrition, child protection, education and water, sanitation and hygiene.

43. Humanitarian access constraints continued to be recorded under the United Nations global monitoring framework. In total, 294 incidents were recorded in 2014, including attacks against personnel, assets and facilities and the violation of health facilities. Of the total number of incidents, 223 affected non-governmental organizations. Overall, 57 aid workers were killed and 47 were injured, 182 were abducted and 11 were arrested or detained. There were 64 incidents recorded against health workers, 13 against de-mining sites and 7 against educational institutions. A temporary ban on the polio vaccination campaign that limited access to 650,000 unvaccinated children was imposed in Hilmand Province by armed non-state actors in mid-December and, after United Nations engagement with all parties, was lifted in early February. Disruptions to the vaccination campaigns are of particular concern, as Afghanistan has reported 28 cases of polio in 2014 compared with 14 cases in 2013.

44. As at 31 December, humanitarian funding for Afghanistan reached $439 million, of which $268 million (66 per cent) is designated for the United Nations Common Humanitarian Action Plan. Of the remaining balance, $67 million was reported for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the remainder is not allocated to a specific agency or programme. Of the funds designated for the Common Humanitarian Action Plan, 67 per cent is allocated to United Nations agencies and programmes and 33 per cent to non-governmental organizations.

VI. Counter-narcotics

45. On 17 December 2014, the Ministry of Counter-Narcotics, with technical support from the United Nations, released the Afghanistan Drug Report 2013, which presented an overview of progress on aspects of the national drug-control strategy. It highlighted that the net export value of opiates was estimated at $2.90 billion which, combined with the value of the domestic market of $0.12 billion, is equivalent to 15 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. The report also noted that although the average price of opium fell, the price remains relatively high at more than $160 per kg compared with the 2009 level of $75 per kg, and therefore opium continues to retain its value. Illicit drug use remained prevalent within the country with an estimated 1.3 to 1.6 million illicit drug users. The report noted that while treatment capacity was increasing, it must be scaled up and sustained in order

to counter the harmful effects of illicit drug use. The report also includes the first situation analysis of counter-narcotics prisoners, and provides data on their socioeconomic background and reasons for involvement in narcotics. The report concludes with a set of policy recommendations to refocus Government counter-narcotic efforts that address its assessment of progress made and the current challenges.

46. Between 1 November 2014 and 31 January 2015, Afghan law enforcement authorities conducted a total of 713 counter-narcotics operations, which resulted in the seizure of 1,700 kg of heroin, 6,325 kg of morphine, 15,012 kg of opium, 39,299 kg of cannabis, 317 kg of solid precursor chemicals and 3,621 l of liquid precursor chemicals. In addition, a total of nine heroin laboratories were dismantled and 182 vehicles and 127 weapons seized. A total of 827 suspects were arrested, with one member of the Afghan security forces killed and four counter-narcotics police officers wounded. The increase in seizures is attributed to a combination of the improved capability of the counter-narcotics police to launch intelligence-led operations and the improved coordination of efforts within Afghan law enforcement agencies and the law enforcement agencies of neighbouring countries.

VII. Mission support

47. UNAMA continued efforts to align resources to ensure cost-efficient operations to enable mandated activities across the country. The Mission has reduced operational costs through efficiencies achieved in the contracting out of the Mission's air operation assets and also in part to the successful roll-out of the Umoja enterprise resource planning project. The Mission also continued to explore further cost-sharing options with United Nations partners to enhance common services, most notably in the provision of emergency medical care.

VIII. Observations

48. At the close of 2014, the overall Kabul process of transition covering political, security and socioeconomic dimensions was completed, as outlined in major international conferences on Afghanistan in Kabul (2010); Bonn, Germany (2011); and Tokyo (2012). Afghanistan has now entered the Transformation Decade as of 1 January 2015, having assumed full leadership and ownership in its national affairs. At December's London Conference, President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah put forward a far-reaching reform agenda entitled "Realizing Self-reliance" which was widely welcomed in Afghanistan and by international partners. Addressing the country's many challenges in a sustainable, strategic and cohesive manner will require strong direction and a whole-of-government approach.

49. The reporting period has been marked by ongoing work to form and finalize the composition of the national unity Government. The prolonged appointment process for Ministers and other senior officials has resulted in understandable frustration on the part of many Afghans who were hoping for more rapid progress. At the same time, the fact that the potentially contentious negotiations have been undertaken in a mutually respectful manner between the two leaders and their teams is encouraging. I call on the executive and legislature to work together closely in

finalizing a diverse and professional administration with strong female representation.

50. The political agreement of 21 September 2014, which set forth a commitment to a national unity Government, also contained an ambitious schedule of elections and reforms, reiterated at the London Conference, to culminate in a Loya Jirga which will address fundamental issues of governance. The deeply held interest in electoral issues, including future Parliamentary and District Council polls, is reflected in the different initiatives which emerged during the reporting period. Broad agreement is urgently required on a cohesive approach. That would involve developing realistic timelines, parameters and sequencing in approaching legal and institutional changes; a robust system of voter identification; and operationalizing preparations for elections. I urge the rapid formation of the agreed Electoral Reform Commission as provided for in the political agreement and support efforts to ensure transparent and inclusive engagement with all stakeholders, including donors, on the way forward.

51. As economic challenges continue to mount, the continued decline in the growth rate of Afghanistan is cause for grave concern. The negative impact on Government revenues has already affected its capacity to deliver administrative functions and services. The relatively mild winter being experienced in Afghanistan could damage the country's largest economic sector, agriculture, owing to the potential for drought. The new administration has made a priority of implementing measures for revenue mobilization, as outlined by the Government's London Conference reform agenda. I welcome the successful adoption of the 2015 budget and its focus on fiscal discipline. As Afghanistan transitions to a more normalized economy, sustained and predictable levels of donor support will remain critical. Member States have a vital role to play in meeting their commitments for financial and security assistance through the Transformation Decade in a manner consistent with strengthening Afghan institutions and processes.

52. Encouraging investor and donor confidence will also entail comprehensive Government efforts to tackle corruption. I welcome the new administration's early attention to accountability and the return of assets over the collapse of Kabul Bank, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different anti-corruption institutions and fulfilling constitutional requirements for senior officials to declare their assets. Sustained attention will be required, including Government commitment to addressing the recommendations of the Independent Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Committee.

53. Amidst economic slowdown, the illicit economy will likely grow proportionally. It risks further entrenching the illegal drug trade. As it is, a criminal nexus fuels insecurity, undermines the rule of law and threatens the health and well-being of Afghanistan, the region and the wider international community. The only sustainable solutions are comprehensive ones in which counter-narcotic efforts are truly mainstreamed into all development planning and strong political will is demonstrated. Enabling the growth of the licit private sector will require continued progress in implementing laws and regulations, including to effectively tackle money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

54. Peace remains the fundamental pre-condition to durable and sustained political and economic progress in Afghanistan. An alignment of factors offer new possibilities at this critical juncture, including the drawdown of international

military forces; a new administration in Kabul; increased regional engagement, including by China; and improved bilateral relations with Pakistan. Concrete steps are now required, and strong, visionary leadership will be necessary to overcome entrenched interests amidst self-generating cycles of conflict stretching back decades. I welcome President Ghani's public calls for Afghan-to-Afghan dialogue and outreach to Islamabad, and I urge all parties to seize this opportunity and work towards agreeing on the necessary mechanisms to formalize and sustain progress. The United Nations in Afghanistan maintains contacts with all parties in accordance with its mandate and continues to use its good offices for this purpose, standing ready to assist as requested. There is added impetus to such efforts in view of more extremist and brutal groups now active in the broader region and with an expansionist agenda.

55. Regional support is a crucial element in reinforcing the likelihood of success of Afghan-led reconciliation efforts and sustainable economic development. The Beijing Declaration at the Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference demonstrated the unanimous backing of the neighbours and regional stakeholders for rapid progress, and I welcome the continued efforts of China to ensure momentum. I continue to urge attention to the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, including lead countries convening regional technical group meetings on the confidence-building measures in accordance with the agreed timeline. I am also encouraged by the strengthened bilateral engagement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and I urge commitment and patience in building the necessary trust. Central to increasing confidence through common interests will be regional trade and strengthened interconnectivity, and I welcome consultations on, inter alia, the formation of the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan Trilateral Transit Trade Agreement.

56. In 2014, the number of civilians killed and injured in the conflict in Afghanistan topped 10,000 for the first time since the United Nations began systematically documenting civilian casualties in 2009. Nearly three quarters of all civilian casualties continue to be attributed to the Taliban and affiliated groups. Ground engagements were the leading annual cause of civilian casualties for the first time. I urge all parties to respect the laws of war, including the distinction between civilians and combatants, and to avoid using heavy weapons in civilian-populated areas. Afghan security forces are now in the lead in securing the country and its population. I commend the resolve and bravery its personnel have demonstrated in the face of rising attacks and welcome continued international support including through the Resolute Support Mission. Strengthening civilian casualty mitigation mechanisms and accountability in the conduct of combat and the treatment of conflict-related detainees must be a priority in the institutional development of Afghan security agencies. The new National Action Plan on the Elimination of Torture is an important step. I look forward to its implementation.

57. The coming summer season will likely see an intensification of the armed conflict. Even amidst the new opportunities for dialogue outlined above, there remain hard-line elements of the insurgency which will want to test the resolve of Afghan security forces. There must be realism about the timelines for a peace process and commitment to the ultimate goal of peace, while recognizing that the path will not be fast and is unlikely to be smooth. The human cost of conflict-related violence goes far beyond immediate casualties. The Mission's annual protection of civilians report for 2014 highlights the plight of widows and their children, who lose not only a breadwinner but a source of social protection when their husbands

have been killed or injured in the conflict. The conflict also continues to adversely affect the capacity of Government, humanitarian actors and communities to respond to crises. Each of the growing number of polio cases in Afghanistan is a personal, and preventable, tragedy, and I note with grave concern that polio vaccination in Hilmand Province was once again disrupted during the reporting period. I welcome its resumption and call on all parties to respect obligations to humanitarian access. To be effective, the immunization campaigns must be sustained and cannot be subject to disputes between parties.

58. The sharp increase in displaced and undocumented individuals returning from Pakistan will require close cooperation in ensuring sustainable solutions, including reintegration into the Afghan economy. Growing internal displacement underscores the importance of continued progress in implementing the national policy on internally displaced persons. I welcome the President's particular interest in and commitment to meeting the needs of this vulnerable population.

59. Noting the continued importance of supporting political stabilization in Afghanistan and monitoring a security situation which gives indications of worsening in the short term, I would request the Security Council to extend the mandate of UNAMA, set to expire on 17 March 2015, for a further 12 months. In so doing, I reiterate the commitment of the United Nations to a sustained partnership with Afghanistan and note the effective manner in which the existing mandate has been utilized throughout 2014, in particular its good offices functions and engagement on critical human rights issues and donor coherence. I call upon Member States to continue to provide the resources required to maintain our engagement and activities across the country.

60. I would like to express my gratitude to all United Nations personnel in Afghanistan and to my Special Representative, Nicholas Haysom, for continued dedication, often under challenging conditions, to fulfilling our commitments in support of the people of Afghanistan.

Annex

Progress achieved against benchmarks

I. Security

Benchmark: sustainable Afghan security institutions and processes capable of ensuring peace and stability and protecting the people of Afghanistan

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increase in the number of national police and national army personnel mentored, trained and operational according to an agreed structure	• As at 1 January 2015, there were 164,161 personnel serving in the Afghan National Army and 6,208 personnel serving in the Afghan Air Force, for a total of 170,369 personnel, which is 24,631 below the end-state objective for January 2015. Also as at 1 January, there were 156,751 personnel serving in the Afghan National Police, which is 246 below the end-state objective.
	• At the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit held in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 4 and 5 September 2014, NATO allies and partners pledged their continued support to the Afghan National Security Forces until the end of 2017, with assistance of approximately $5.1 billion per year and continued dialogue under the NATO-Afghanistan Enduring Partnership.
Development of and progress in a plan for a phased and conditions-based transition to Afghan security lead	• On 31 December 2014, the Inteqal/security transition process was completed as Afghan forces assumed full responsibility for security as the International Security Assistance Force finalized its mission in Afghanistan, and on 1 January 2015 the Resolute Support Mission commenced in the country.
	• On 30 September 2014, the Government signed the Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States of America and the status-of-forces agreement with NATO. On 12 December, the Security Council adopted resolution 2189 (2014), welcoming the agreement between NATO and the Government of Afghanistan to establish the NATO Resolute Support Mission, which will provide training, advice and assistance to the Afghan security forces.

II. Peace, reintegration and reconciliation

Benchmark: national dialogue and regional engagement to pursue constructive and inclusive processes to foster a political environment conducive to peace

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Development and implementation of inclusive national and regional processes to enhance peace, reintegration and reconciliation efforts	• In 2014, a total of 1,716 anti-Government element individuals were enrolled in the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme. The Provincial Joint Secretariat Teams demonstrated enhanced ability to develop community recovery projects with the Programme's support, as demonstrated by the development of approximately 2,200 projects in conjunction with line Ministries. • A High Peace Council delegation visited Saudi Arabia between 28 December 2013 and 2 January 2014 to attend a meeting of religious scholars hosted by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The High Peace Council's proposal to form a working group of international ulama to counter religious narratives which fuel violence was positively received. • On 16 February 2014, the trilateral Pakistan-Turkey-Afghanistan summit in Ankara called on the Afghan Taliban to join the peace process and the international community to contribute to efforts aimed at supporting an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. • On 29 September, in his inauguration speech, President Ghani pledged to focus his efforts on establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan. To that end, he announced that he would be open to talks with the Taliban. • On 31 October, at the fourth Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference, President Ghani reiterated his invitation to the "political opposition, particularly the Taliban, to join an inter-Afghan dialogue" and requested international partners to support the Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process. • During President Ghani's visit to Islamabad on 14 and 15 November, the Pakistani leadership pledged support to Afghanistan in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table. The parties also agreed on joint efforts to curb extremism and terrorism in both countries. • In December, Chief Executive Abdullah met with the heads of the Provincial Peace Committees and encouraged greater participation of women in the peace process.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased ability by Afghan authorities to gather and provide substantiated, updated and accurate information to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011)	• In 2014, the Government of Afghanistan provided substantiated, updated and accurate information to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011). • In 2014, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011) enacted 15 amendments to its List (the 1988 List) of individuals and entities subject to the assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo set out in paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 2082 (2012), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.
Increased public support for the peace process through engagement at the community level and with civil society	• In February 2014, the High Peace Council, with the support of women's non-governmental organizations, launched a women's peace campaign that collected 250,000 women's signatures on a petition calling for peace and a ceasefire. The message urged the Government, armed opposition and the international community to make serious efforts to ensure peace in the country. • In September, the Peace Day celebrations supported by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and provincial peace committees across Afghanistan expressed public support for peace and stressed that a meaningful political dialogue with anti-Government elements is the only solution to the protracted conflict. • On 8 October, an event marking the Global Open Day on Women, Peace and Security, organized by the United Nations, local authorities and civil society, stressed the importance of women's participation in peace efforts in the country. • On 7 November, President Ghani met with the ulama and religious scholars urging them to play a proactive role in bringing lasting peace to the country. The ulama and religious scholars assured the President of their full support.

III. Governance and institution-building

Benchmark: extension of Government authority throughout the country through the establishment of democratic, legitimate, accountable institutions, down to the local level, with the capacity to implement policies and to be increasingly capable of sustaining themselves

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased ability by Afghan authorities and independent electoral institutions to manage and conduct genuine and periodic elections, with due regard to women's participation and constitutionally guaranteed quotas	• On 1 April 2014, in preparation for the 2014 elections, the Independent Election Commission completed a top-up registration exercise that distributed 3,819,346 additional voter cards to people who had reached 18 years of age, changed their place of residence or lost their voter cards. • In 2014, the Independent Election Complaints Commission improved its infrastructure and operational capacity and established 34 provincial offices. The Complaints Commission presented an interim strategic and operational plan and published procedures for the registration, filing and adjudication of electoral challenges and complaints. • Throughout 2014, 102 provincial complaints commissioners for the Independent Election Complaints Commission were appointed in 34 provincial offices. • The Media Commission, a temporary entity created with the aim of supervising the conduct of the media during the electoral period, developed guidelines to govern the conduct of media outlets, held a series of workshops across the country to explain media regulations, issued statements calling for respect of the rules and adjudicated complaints filed against media outlets. • On 5 April 2014, presidential and provincial council elections took place in Afghanistan. In total, 6,082 polling centres and 19,784 polling stations were operational on election day. As no presidential candidate received an absolute majority in the first election, a second round of elections for President took place on 14 June between the two leading candidates, Abdullah Abdullah and Mohammad Ashraf Ghani. On election run-off day, 6,225 polling centres were reported to be operational. • Based on the assessment of the first round of elections, the Independent Election Commission made changes to improve the process in the second round. These changes included improved pre-positioning of contingency materials to facilitate the response in cases of ballot shortages and the addition of about 2,000 polling stations in polling centres to improve voter accessibility.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The electoral process relied on national and international observers, as well as party agents, to oversee the conduct of the polls. In the first round of elections 67 national organizations with a total of 14,585 observers participated across the country. That rose to 40,743 observers for the second round. Candidates and political parties registered 362,780 agents during the first round and 70,041 agents for the second round.
	• UNAMA worked closely with the Independent Election Commission and donor community to ensure the integration of gender concerns in the 2014 election process. UNAMA monitoring of measures related to women's participation, awareness-raising activities and advocacy contributed to increased participation of voters and election workers in the elections. The 20 per cent quota for Provincial Council representation of women set by the electoral legislation was achieved.
Establishment of a monitoring and evaluation committee and the development of anti-corruption benchmarks	• On 2 October 2014, the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee released the Kabul Bank follow-up report, which provided an update on recoveries, criminal proceedings, financial regulation and the privatization of New Kabul Bank. On the same day, a presidential decree was issued reopening the Kabul Bank fraud case, and on 11 November, the Court of Appeal tripled the sentences of two former Bank heads from 5 to 15 years. The Court also endorsed the court order to freeze the assets of Mahmood Karzai, the brother of former President Karzai, along with the assets of other senior former Bank officials, until all funds are recovered.
	• On 19 November, the Committee released its report on the usurpation of State and private land, which noted that more than 240,000 hectares of land have been usurped in the past decade, largely through the forgery of official deeds by court officials and the forgery and falsification of documents relating to land transfers in Kabul Municipality. The report also indicated that less than 34 per cent of the country's land has been surveyed and legally registered, leaving the rest vulnerable to usurpation.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The Committee released its sixth Vulnerability to Corruption Assessment report on the pharmaceutical importation process on 19 November. The report indicated that 50 per cent of the country's pharmaceutical imports are of low quality, which the Committee attributed to the absence of strong drug procurement laws, weak procedures and licensing requirements and irregularities in the selection, importation and distribution of drugs. The report also noted that the Ministry of Public Health lacks the capacity to effectively monitor drug importation, which is largely controlled by foreign pharmaceutical suppliers.
Empowerment of anti-corruption institutions to oversee a whole-of-Government approach to anti-corruption	• On 8 November 2014, the President's Office issued an administrative order to revise the anti-corruption functions of the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption, the Supreme Audit Office and the Attorney General's Office to reduce duplication and ensure complementarity. In addition, in October 2014, the Government upheld the oversight role of the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, including its monitoring of anti-corruption measures in government institutions.
Annual publication of asset declarations of public officials	• In 2014, the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption registered the assets of 5,525 government officials in Kabul and some provinces, bringing the total number of asset registrations to approximately 8,500 by the end of the year. The Office also published information on the asset verifications of 167 high-ranking government officials, including former President Karzai, his vice-presidents and some senior members of his Government, which brings the total number of asset verifications of high-ranking officials to 200.
Increased capacity of civil servants at the central, provincial and district levels to discharge functions and deliver services	• In 2014, the Civil Service Training Institute delivered training on management, computer skills, English-language proficiency, planning and finance/accounting to 4,974 civil servants at the national level and 9,826 at the subnational level. In addition, 1,867 senior and mid-level civil servants received training on local governance and public financial management in India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.
Increased transparency and effectiveness of civil service appointments	• Merit-based recruitment of District Governors continued in 2014, with a further 90 District Governors appointed through that process, bringing the total number of District Governors recruited through a merit-based process to 321. In addition, 2 more Deputy Provincial Governors were appointed, for a total of 34 Deputy Provincial Governors recruited under the system.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Strengthened civil service reform supported by a comprehensive approach to capacity-building and donor-funded technical assistance	• In 2014, the Capacity-building for Results Programme managed by the World Bank approved proposals from the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, the Ministry of Commerce and Industries, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled and the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum.
Implementation of the subnational governance policy and the development of subnational regulatory, financing and budgetary frameworks	• The delay in the formation of the Government hindered finalization of the municipality law. The draft law is currently awaiting endorsement by the President before submission to the Parliament for passage of the law. • In January 2014, the provincial budgeting policy was drafted by the Ministry of Finance and submitted to the Cabinet for approval. In October, the President instructed the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the Ministry of Finance to develop a mechanism to increase budget allocations to the provinces. • In April, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance approved the new Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to track progress of programmes and activities at the subnational level. • In May, the draft Local Administration Law was discussed in all committees of the lower house of Parliament and is currently waiting to be tabled in the Plenary Session of the Parliament for approval. • In October, the amended Provincial Council Law was approved by both houses of Parliament and submitted to the President in November. In January 2015, the President returned the law to the lower house to clarify the roles of the Provincial Councils. On 28 January, Parliament amended the law, removing the Provincial Councils' oversight role. That decision was refuted by Provincial Council members throughout the country, who closed their offices in protest. They have requested that the President not endorse the amendment. In response, the President has tasked the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to resolve the issue.
Development and publication of criteria for administrative boundaries	• National and international institutions continue to use the 2009 internal boundary data set as stipulated by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and the Geodesy and Cartography Head Office.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Establishment of adequate infrastructure for functioning Government institutions, especially at the subnational level	• The Independent Directorate of Local Governance partially completed the construction of 5 provincial administrative buildings and 18 district administrative buildings. In addition, the Directorate completed construction work on one provincial council building and partially completed three others.
Establishment of credible and accessible judicial and penal systems that respect and uphold the human rights of all citizens	• In 2014, the Criminal Law Reform Working Group, chaired by the Ministry of Justice, continued work on the process of revising and consolidating all criminal laws, including the 1976 Penal Code, into a new penal code, with 350 articles now revised. The revised penal code is expected to be finalized by the Ministry by the end of 2015, and then must be approved by the President and the National Assembly. As supported by UNAMA, the new penal code will include, for the first time, all anti-corruption provisions mandated by the United Nations Convention against Corruption, crimes required by the protocols on trafficking in humans and smuggling persons of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the definitions of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide consistent with the Rome Statute. • Following the ratification of the Criminal Procedure Code in February 2014, the Ministry of Justice commenced efforts to implement the new code across the legal system and UNAMA continued to provide support to assist the coordination of international support and advice to assist the Ministry. • In 2014, the Policy Advisory Group on Land was established to improve international stakeholders' coherence in providing expert technical advice to support policy discussions with Government counterparts on effective and transparent land administration and management systems. The Group identified several focus areas for policy development and implementation to strengthen land administration and management, including the role of courts and the Afghanistan Land Authority (Arazi) in issuing and registering titles, the role of informal land dispute resolution mechanisms and linkages with the formal legal system, usurped Government land recovery and restitution and enforcement of women's inheritance and Mahr rights.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• In 2014, UNAMA issued a thematic report on land usurpation which identified a number of deficiencies in the legal framework surrounding land management and recommended the establishment of a national civil law reform group to develop an integrated framework that includes criminal penalties. • In 2014, the Central Department of Prisons drafted its two-year strategic plan, which was approved by the Ministry of Interior Affairs in June. To address continued issues of overcrowding, in 2014 the Ministry of Interior Affairs funded the construction of two prisons at Kapisa and Badakhshan, which will increase the prison holding capacity by 850 beds. The Ministry of Justice also funded the building of juvenile rehabilitation centres in Nangarhar, Farah and Balkh to improve the living conditions and facilitate juvenile justice programmes. • In 2014, the Ministry of Public Health completed a review of the 2009 prison health services package with UNAMA support. As a result, the Ministry of Public Health is redrafting their memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Interior Affairs to improve service delivery.

IV. Human rights

Benchmark: improved respect for the human rights of Afghans, in line with the Afghan Constitution and international law, with particular emphasis on the protection of civilians, the situation of women and girls, freedom of expression and accountability based on the rule of law

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Reduction in the number of incidents of unlawful use of force and intimidation of civilians, through compliance by relevant actors with international law	• In 2014, UNAMA documented 10,548 civilian casualties (3,699 killed and 6,849 injured), a 22 per cent increase in total civilian casualties compared with 2013. Some 72 per cent of civilian casualties were attributed to anti-Government elements, 14 per cent to pro-Government forces (12 per cent to Afghan National Security Forces and 2 per cent to international military forces) and 10 per cent to unattributed cross-fire between pro-Government forces and anti-Government elements. Ground engagements between anti-Government elements and pro-Government forces remained the leading cause of civilian casualties, accounting for 3,605 civilian casualties (1,092 killed and 2,513 injured); followed by improvised explosive devices, accounting for 2,978 civilian casualties (925 killed and 2,053 injured).

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• In 2014, the United Nations-led country task force on monitoring and reporting on children and armed conflict documented 2,502 child casualties (710 killed and 1,792 injured), an increase of 48 per cent compared with 2013.
	• The Government made significant progress in implementing its "road map towards compliance", a 15-point targeted plan aimed at expediting the implementation of the 2011 Action plan to prevent and end underage recruitment. On 13 December 2014, the upper house of the National Assembly approved a draft presidential decree criminalizing underage recruitment by the Afghan National Security Forces, which President Ghani endorsed on 2 February 2015. United Nations advocacy with legislators and Ministry of Justice representatives contributed to the Senate's approval of the decree.
	• In September 2014, a national birth registration strategy was endorsed by the Ministry of Interior Affairs with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an initiative that will strengthen protection against underage recruitment.
	• In November, Afghan security forces, with the support of the United Nations, conducted a workshop on age assessment procedures for recruitment for the Afghan security forces and stakeholders, which resulted in a revised set of guidelines to improve and standardize age verification procedures across the security sector.
	• In 2014, the Government continued the tracking of civilian casualties through the civilian casualties tracking cell in the Presidential Information Coordination Centre.
	• United Nations advocacy contributed to increased accountability of Afghan Local Police members, including the investigation of 68 accounts of Afghan Local Police-related human rights violations by the Monitoring and Investigations section of the Afghan Local Police Directorate. Officials in the Directorate reported that the investigations led to 64 arrests and four convictions.
	• In 2014, the International Security Assistance Forces made significant progress in marking and surface clearance of high-explosive firing ranges no longer in use to reduce civilian casualties from explosive remnants of war.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved awareness by Afghans of their rights and by the Government of its obligations	• UNAMA continued to monitor the treatment of conflict-related detainees in Afghan custody and the implementation of Presidential Decree no. 129 issued in February 2013 aimed at ending and preventing torture and ill-treatment. The country's new Criminal Procedure Code entered into force on 5 June 2014 and strengthened due process and fair trial guarantees. UNAMA advocated for the creation of a national preventive mechanism to address torture and ill-treatment in line with international best practices. • In 2014, UNAMA published two reports on the protection of civilians and carried out advocacy activities with stakeholders and the media to raise awareness among the population of the findings and recommendations. On 13 May, UNAMA launched a booklet on the obligations of all parties to the armed conflict to respect and promote the rights of children guaranteed under Afghan law, the fundamental teachings of Islam and Sharia law and international law, supported by more than 50 workshops with stakeholders and distribution of 7,700 copies of the booklet. • On 8 October 2014, the United Nations organized the "Global Open Day on Women, Peace and Security", under Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), with events in Kabul and in 12 provinces across the country, involving more than 200 women, including from remote districts; the theme was "Women's Participation in Political and Peace Processes — Achievements, Gaps and Way Forward". • In 2014, UNICEF, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and other partners sensitized more than 600 participants, including security personnel, provincial and district authorities, religious and tribal leaders, civil society, education personnel, health workers and members of the Child Protection Action Network, on grave violations against children in armed conflict and reporting on and prevention of those violations. • The Ministry of Women's Affairs, with support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) conducted a series of awareness-raising activities in 16 provinces on the legal framework addressing the protection needs of women and girls. During the activities, around 1,440 attendees, including police, religious scholars, community leaders and women's groups, received training on the content of the Elimination of Violence against Women law and the legal framework of Afghanistan.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved impact of, and support for, legal and policy measures to combat violence against women and girls	• On 1 March and 24 November 2014, the Government, supported by the United Nations, launched two reports on the status of its implementation of the Elimination of Violence against Women law, in line with its commitments under the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework. The reports reviewed progress to date on the implementation of the law and proposed a range of remedial actions, including establishing a comprehensive database, strengthening national and provincial commissions on elimination of violence against women, and increasing awareness of the law, which were consistent with United Nations recommendations. • The number of prosecution units established for the elimination of violence against women under the Attorney General's Office increased from 8 to 18 provinces in 2014. The United Nations provided technical support to commissions for the elimination of violence against women in 32 provinces. • The Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, with technical support from the United Nations, held a national conference on 16 September 2014, which established a drafting committee charged with developing detailed guidelines to regulate the use of mediation for cases of violence against women. • In January, the Ministry of Interior Affairs endorsed a strategy for the integration and protection of women in the Afghan National Police. On 10 March, an inter-ministerial commission was established and tasked with drafting an action plan to implement the strategy, to which UNAMA provided technical support. The Ministry of Interior Affairs adopted the final plan on 13 August, which outlines measures to improve the participation, protection and professionalization of women in the police. In November, at the request of the Government, UNAMA provided policy advice on steps the Government could take to prohibit sexual harassment in public life. • The lower house of the National Assembly amended article 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code to reinstate previous legal provisions enabling women to continue to testify against relatives, facilitating the prosecution of suspects in cases of domestic violence. The United Nations and partners' advocacy contributed to the process.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• Beginning on 25 November 2014, as part of the global campaign of 16 days of activism against gender violence, the United Nations supported outreach activities across the country, hosting debates, radio programmes and workshops that raised awareness of the urgent need to address violence against Afghan women and girls and relevant legal protections under Afghan and international law for women and girls.
	• On 16 November, the Ministry of Public Health launched Afghanistan's first Gender-based Violence Treatment Protocol for Health-care Providers, developed together with the United Nations.
Improved awareness of, and support for, legal and policy measures related to combating impunity and furthering transitional justice	• In 2014, the second phase of the Afghan People's Dialogue neared completion. The People's Dialogue, an inclusive civil society-led peace initiative conducted over the past three years with UNAMA facilitation, engaged 6,000 Afghans in identifying local drivers of conflict and developing local road maps for peace. Participants developed 34 provincial road maps for peace with 12 of them launched at a national conference in January 2015. On 10 June 2014, the People's Dialogue launched its report on national findings, which articulated a 10-point national road map for peace with 33 recommendations, including tackling corruption, disempowering and disarming militias, promoting human rights and equitable development and access to services and making the peace process more inclusive.
	• The Government underscored its commitment to the participation of women in political, peace and security processes by endorsing the National Action Plan on the Implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) at a steering committee meeting in October 2014.
Government fulfilment of reporting requirements on international human rights covenants and conventions and implementation of the recommendations from the Human Rights Council universal periodic review of Afghanistan	• In January 2014, Afghanistan underwent its second universal periodic review by the Human Rights Council. During the review, 89 States made 224 recommendations to Afghanistan. Afghanistan accepted 189, rejected 12 and undertook to consider the remaining 23 recommendations.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• On 4 August, the Council of Ministers passed the "Regulation on Support of Human Rights in Government Administrations", which clarified the role of the Ministry of Justice's Human Rights Support Unit, mandating it to ensure compliance of national legislation with the country's international human rights commitments and monitor its implementation of United Nations human rights treaties and universal periodic review recommendations.
	• In 2014, the Human Rights Support Unit of the Ministry of Justice, with United Nations support, continued consultations with Government ministries and institutions to prioritize the implementation of its commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
	• The Government continued preparation of its State party report to the Committee against Torture, holding three conferences in 2014 to engage Government officials, the judiciary and civil society in the reporting process.
Increased capacity and commitment of the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, as the Afghan national human rights institution, to respect, protect, fulfil and promote human rights	• In 2014, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission made significant efforts to address concerns over its independence, gender-staffing ratio and financing, issues that were raised in its 2013 accreditation review by the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. In October, the Commission was reviewed for reaccreditation and in December, following the Committee's recommendation, the International Coordinating Committee Bureau made a final decision that the Commission was in compliance with the Paris Principles and retained its "A" status.
	• On 10 December 2014, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission published its five-year strategic plan for 2014-2018, developed with support from the United Nations. The plan outlines five strategic objectives for the Commission: to promote and protect human rights, to lead the Afghan human rights movement and advocate for change, to monitor the Government's compliance with national and international human rights obligations, to protect the rights of victims and to ensure the Commission's effectiveness.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• On 20 August, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission released a report on the causes and consequences of Bacha Bazi ("playing with boys"), a practice that involves the sexual exploitation of boys by men in positions of power in Afghanistan. The Commission called on the Government to end this serious human rights abuse by criminalizing the practice, prosecuting perpetrators and identifying and protecting victims. The report attributed the abusive practice on factors such as weak rule of law, corruption, poverty and the presence of illegal armed groups in the country.
	• UNICEF continued to support national organizations in the provision of psychosocial support for children in detention in Kabul and Kandahar juvenile rehabilitation centres. In total, 338 children, 328 boys and 10 girls, many of whom were detained on national security related charges, were provided with psychosocial support in 2014.

V. Economic and social development

Benchmark: Government policies supported by the international community that promote sustainable economic growth and contribute to overall stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
National priority programmes are designed and implemented with international support and endorsement	• In June 2014, the Ministry of Economy released the completion report for the five-year Afghanistan National Development Strategy, which concluded in 2013 and was the basis for the national priority programmes. The report assessed progress in eight sectors against development indicators, identifying the health sector as the strongest performing, with 88 per cent of indicators achieved, and private sector development and social protection as the weakest sectors, with 45 and 46 per cent of indicators achieved respectively.
	• In 2014, the 21 endorsed national priority programmes continued to serve as the Government's plan for national development and the de facto guidance for donors seeking to align programming with Government priorities.
	• In its paper entitled "Realizing Self-Reliance — Commitments to Reforms and Renewed Partnership", the Government expressed the intent to consolidate national priority programmes, with the aim of reducing the total from 21 to 12 or fewer.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
More equitable distribution of development assistance and Government expenditure throughout Afghanistan	• In October 2014, President Ghani instructed the Ministry of Finance and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to formulate a proposal for increased budget allocation to the provinces of up to 40 per cent. In 2014, all 34 provinces were engaged in the Pilot Provincial Budgeting Programme, with the 12 least-developed provinces receiving $3 million each and the remaining provinces receiving $1 million each.
Increased revenue collection and sustainable growth based on Afghan resources	• The World Bank's Global Economic Prospects report of January 2015 continues to show a slowdown of the country's growth in gross domestic product, from 3.7 per cent in 2013 to 1.5 per cent in 2014. The report projects increasing growth rates from 2015-2017. • In 2014, Government revenue collection fell short, with revenues of $1.8 billion against a target of $2.2 billion. Delays in introducing new tax measures, in particular a value-added tax; weak customs and tax compliance; and uncertainties arising from the political and security transitions contributed to the decline in revenues, which led to an unfinanced fiscal gap. • In October 2014, the Government wrote to donors requesting funding to close the fiscal gap. Several donors responded with funding over the following months, in some cases shifting funds previously intended for development initiatives to help fill the gap. The Government also shifted funds away from development initiatives to fill the gap; the 2015 budget, approved by the National Assembly on 28 January 2015, allows ongoing Government-funded development projects to continue, but approved no new discretionary initiatives for 2015.

VI. Regional cooperation

Benchmark: sustained and effective regional coordination in support of prosperity, peace and stability

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Improved coordination of regional bodies and increased regional investments	• From 2 to 11 February 2014, a delegation of 13 representatives from the Afghan National Disaster Management Agency visited Japan as part of activities supported by Japan under the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process confidence-building measures.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• On 13 February, the eighth Trilateral Pakistan-Afghanistan-Turkey Summit was held in Ankara and focused on the theme "Sustainable peace in the Heart of Asia". The joint statement emphasized the importance of a political settlement within the framework of the Afghan Constitution and called upon the Afghan Taliban to join the peace process.
	• On 16 February, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan signed three Memorandums of Understanding to strengthen ties on political, economic and security issues.
	• On 26 and 27 February, Afghanistan hosted a workshop on countering terrorism financing, as part of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process counter-terrorism confidence-building measures.
	• On 3 March, the Foreign Ministries of Afghanistan and Turkmenistan signed a programme of cooperation for 2014-2015.
	• On 5 March, in Moscow, an anti-cannabis seminar was held as an activity under the counter-narcotics confidence-building measures of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process. On 8 and 9 March, a counter-improvised explosive device workshop under the counter-terrorism confidence-building measures of the Process took place in Kabul.
	• On 26 March, five new bilateral agreements were signed between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, including a Joint Declaration on the Expansion and Strengthening of Bilateral Relations, and a cooperation agreement between their Interior Ministries.
	• On 27 March, the Presidents of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Tajikistan held a quadrilateral summit. Their joint statement reiterated their support to the Afghan-led regional efforts within the framework of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process; emphasized the need for joint efforts, through enhanced security cooperation, to combat the financing and support of terrorism; and underscored the importance of supporting and facilitating direct dialogue and reconciliation.
	• On 27 March, the World Bank Board of Directors approved $526.5 million in grant and credit financing for the Central Asia South Asia Electricity Transmission and Trade Project for Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Tajikistan. On 2 December, in Istanbul, Turkey, the four countries signed a pricing and quantities agreement on the project.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• On 15 May, the fourth Regional Technical Group meeting of the Trade, Commerce and Investment Opportunity confidence-building measure of the Istanbul Process was held in New Delhi, India, where the confidence-building measures activity plan for 2014-2015 was developed.
	• On 2 July, in Kabul, President Karzai met with the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia and Pacific Affairs, Ebrahim Rahimpour, to discuss how to develop bilateral relationships in all fields.
	• On 8 July, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Turkmenistan signed the operational plan for the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline.
	• On 10 July, a second Senior Officials Meeting of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process took place in Beijing. The meeting was to provide comments on the draft declaration of the fourth Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process and review progress on the six confidence-building measures.
	• The 2014 Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit took place in Dushanbe on 11 and 12 September. The Summit Declaration expressed support for Afghanistan as an independent, peaceful, neutral and prosperous State, and for strengthening the central coordinating role of the United Nations in international efforts to an Afghan settlement.
	• On 18 October, President Ghani and President Erdogan of Turkey signed a Strategic Partnership and Friendship Agreement on security, reconstruction, trade and investment cooperation.
	• On 28 October, during President Ghani's official visit to China, the two countries signed four agreements addressing trade, bilateral economic ties, humanitarian aid and travel permits for public servants.
	• On 30 and 31 October, the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Senior Officials Meeting and Ministerial Conference were held in Beijing. The Ministerial Conference concluded with the Declaration entitled "Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process: Deepening Cooperation for Sustainable Security and Prosperity of the Heart of Asia Region".
	• On 15 December, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit took place in Kazakhstan. Chief Executive Abdullah represented Afghanistan.

VII. Partnership between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community

Benchmark: coherent support by the international community for Afghan priorities within an Afghan-led coordination framework

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increased percentage of aid aligned with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and Government priorities	• On 24 July 2014, the Government began its annual Development Cooperation Dialogues, which are high-level meetings between the Ministry of Finance and major donors that aim to improve aid coordination. For the first time, the 2014 Dialogues included United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. • In October, the Ministry of Finance updated its aid management policy guidance note on aligning donor funding with national priority programmes. • In the fourth quarter of 2014 and first quarter of 2015, a number of donors provided funding in response to the Government's October 2014 request for assistance to fill the 2014 fiscal gap. The contributions allowed the Government to address urgent priorities, including salary payments and payment of arrears, and were largely delivered through on-budget mechanisms. • In January 2015, the President's Office contacted a number of major donors, as well as United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, to request reviews of aid and assistance portfolios, including programme performance and alignment with the Government's reform plans. • On 6 May 2014, the Government endorsed in principle the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2015-2019, which, it recognized, was aligned with Government programmes and development plans. The Framework supports key areas of the Afghan development agenda focused on the licit economy, basic services, social equity, the rule of law and governance.
Improved accountability of procurement and contracting on behalf of the Government and the international community	• The Incentive Programme of the World Bank-administered Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund encourages ministries to develop procurement capacity that can be certified by the Ministry of Finance Procurement Policy Unit. The Programme set targets of three new certifications for each of the years from 2012 to 2014. In 2012 and 2013, the Government achieved that target. In 2014, the Ministry of Finance reported one certification for the Office of the State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• The Government's paper, entitled "Realizing Self-reliance — Commitments to Reforms and Renewed Partnership", announced its intention to reduce collusive procurement practices, described as a key driver of corruption, by forming a national procurement board to manage high-value contracts using internationally recognized standards and procedures.
Strengthening of the Joint Coordination Monitoring Board in support of the Kabul process and as a means of regular review of progress on Afghan priorities and mutual commitments	• On 27 November 2014, at the request of the Government, a special meeting of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board was convened, with UNAMA as co-chair. During the meeting, the Government gave a preliminary presentation of its reform plans developed for the London Conference on Afghanistan and outlined in the paper entitled "Realizing Self-reliance — Commitments to Reforms and Renewed Partnership".
	• Throughout 2014, the aid coordination group of the heads of donor agencies continued to meet regularly, alternating between donor-only meetings hosted by UNAMA and joint donor-Government meetings hosted by the Ministry of Finance. The regular meetings, accompanied by working meetings of a subset of major donors, supported the ongoing review of development progress and Government and donor mutual commitments.

VIII. Counter-narcotics

Benchmark: sustained trend in the reduction of poppy cultivation, narcotics production and drug addiction

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Decrease in poppy cultivation, narcotics production and addiction rates	• Opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan increased again in 2014, with the total area under cultivation estimated at 224,000 hectares, a 7 per cent increase over the 209,000 hectares cultivated in 2013. Opium production in 2014 is estimated at 6,400 tons, which represents a 17 per cent increase over the 5,500 tons in 2013 and is the second-highest level of opium production since 1994. The increase was accompanied by a decrease in prices, leading to an overall fall in the value of the country's opium economy. The overall number of poppy-free provinces in Afghanistan remained the same in 2014, with 98 per cent of total opium cultivation in the southern, eastern and western regions of the country.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
	• In 2014, the capacity of drug treatment facilities increased to a total of 39,200 beds in 123 treatment facilities in 28 provinces of Afghanistan.
	• In 2014, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) worked closely with the Government and donor community to develop a transition plan for the transitioning of drug treatment centres to the Ministry of Public Health. In line with the first phase of the plan, 13 drug treatment centres were handed over to the Government in 2014.
Increase in effective interdiction and counter-trafficking efforts	• In 2014, counter-narcotics police conducted 2,734 operations, seizing 4,146 kg of heroin, 6,361 kg of morphine, 69,169 kg of opium, 44,583 kg of hashish, 3 kg of methamphetamine, 39,608 kg of solid precursor chemicals, and 48,851 l of liquid precursor chemicals. In addition, a total of 45 heroin manufacturing laboratories were dismantled in 2014. The operations led to the arrest of 2,803 suspects, the deaths of five Afghan National Security Forces personnel and two counter-narcotics police, and the wounding of nine counter-narcotics police.
	• The National Intelligence Working Group on Precursors continued to support inter-agency cooperation in strengthening precursor control and information sharing in Afghanistan. In 2014, the Working Group reviewed results of backtracking investigations into 11 seizures, involving over 5 tons of acetic anhydride, 4 tons of hydrochloric acid and 16 tons of ammonium chloride.
	• In May, a ministerial-level meeting within the framework of the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Initiative was convened to review progress made and endorse a road map of joint activities, which enabled law enforcement agencies from the three countries to conduct joint operations, resulting in the seizure of 137 kg of hashish and 11 kg of opium and the arrest of two suspects.
	• In 2014, within the framework of the Trianguiar Initiative between Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, a number of joint operations were conducted, which resulted in the seizure of 243 kg of opium and 1,020 kg of hashish and the arrest of 10 suspects.

Indicators of progress	*Metrics*
Increase in licit agriculture and related private capital investment in areas previously used for poppy cultivation	• Despite the increase in opium poppy cultivation in 2013 and 2014, there have also been significant increases in agricultural production and productivity, primarily in areas which are relatively poppy-free. The average increase in the export of agricultural and non-agricultural commodities was 33.3 per cent in 2014. According to the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, exports of dried fruits and medicinal plants increased by 27.8 and 20.5 per cent respectively in 2014, totalling $234.7 million. In addition, carpet exports increased by 149.0 per cent in 2014 and exports of cereal crops increased by 10.0 per cent. • To support regional cooperation on alternative livelihoods initiatives, from 9 to 12 November 2014 UNODC facilitated engagements with experts from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan in an effort to develop the vegetable oil industry in Afghanistan and establish links between Afghan cotton traders and the textile industry in China.

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General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 107
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 26 February 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Armed terrorist groups such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front, the Free Army and Army of Islam are waging a systematic and relentless campaign of terrorism against the innocent civilians of the Syrian Arab Republic. In continuation of that campaign, terrorist groups affiliated with Al-Qaida carried out attacked dozens of villages, including Tall Harmaz, Tall Shamiram, Tall Rumman, Tall Nusra, Aghaybish, Tuma Yalda, Hawuz, Tall Kawran and Tall Tamar in the countryside of Hasakah governorate, killing many innocent civilians. They also abducted 200 civilians, among whom were a number women and children, displaced more than 690 families, attacked places of worship and burned the historic church of Tall Harmaz, one of the oldest churches in Syria and the world.

Those crimes that were committed against Syrian civilians are just yet another round in the ugly and ongoing cycle of crime that the entire Syrian people, without exception, have been enduring. They are also an attempt to sow disunion, hatred and enmity Syrian society, which has been known from time immemorial for its deeply rooted tradition of harmony, love, brotherhood and tolerance, a tradition that has bound its various components. Starting from Syria, and its one people, the alphabet spread throughout the world. Religions have also spread from Syria to the four corners of the world, heralding the word of Christ, the messenger of love, and of Muhammad (peace be upon him), the messenger of mercy and the seal of the prophets. Christianity and Islam spread out from Syria proclaiming peace, mercy and love to the entire world.

The above-mentioned crimes are a continuation of the atrocities committed by armed terrorist groups, which have demolished religious sites, houses of worship, the tombs of holy figures, companions of the prophet Muhammad and saints, as well as historical and cultural sites throughout Syria, with the aim of inflicting the greatest damage possible to the human heritage and civilization of Syria and to its people's history and cultural identity.

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Please recycle

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that such acts of terrorism would not have occurred were it not for the direct support that those terrorist organizations, which espouse an extremist and exclusionary ideology, continue to receive from States that are known to all. Syria believes that is now incumbent upon the international community and the States that stand against terrorism, extremism and fanaticism to compel those States that have been supporting the campaign of blind terrorism being waged against Syria and its people over the past four years to cease their support, whether in the form of funding, arms, equipment, training or information. They must also put pressure on the former group of States, which are known to all and have been the subject of previous letters from us, to stop the flow of foreign terrorists into Syria. The international community is now called upon to affirm its commitment to combat terrorism and extremist terrorist groups by cooperating and coordinating fully in that regard with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, which stands as a bulwark against the spread of international terrorism, by implementing in good faith the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), which must not remain merely words on paper.

In that connection, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic affirms that it is fully ready to cooperate, whether bilaterally or at the international level, with sincere and honest actors in order to counter terrorism and eradicate it, so as to spare humanity the evils of blind terrorism and the horrors of extremism, which threatens to wipe out human values and civilization.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 107, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2015/153

Security Council

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3 March 2015

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Australia, Chile, France, Lithuania, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions and statements on South Sudan, in particular resolutions 2057 (2012), 2109 (2013), 2132 (2013), 2155 (2014) and 2187 (2014),

Expressing grave alarm and concern regarding the conflict between the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and opposition forces since December 2013 which emanated from internal political disputes among the country's political and military leaders,

Deeply concerned that the conflict has resulted in great human suffering, including significant loss of life, displacement of two million people, and the loss of property, further impoverishing and disadvantaging the people of South Sudan,

Strongly condemning past and ongoing human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including those involving targeted killings of civilians, ethnically-targeted violence, extrajudicial killings, rape, and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence, recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, abductions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detention, violence aimed at spreading terror among the civilian population, and attacks on schools, places of worship and hospitals, as well as United Nations and associated peacekeeping personnel and objects, by all parties, including armed groups and national security forces, as well as the incitement to commit such abuses and violations, *further condemning* harassment and targeting of civil society, humanitarian personnel and journalists, and *emphasizing* that those responsible for violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights must be held accountable, and that the Government of South Sudan bears the primary responsibility to protect its population from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity,

Expressing deep concern over the large-scale displacement of persons and deepening humanitarian crisis, *stressing* the responsibility borne by all parties to the conflict for the suffering of the people of South Sudan, and the necessity of ensuring that the basic needs of the population are met, *commending* United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners for their efforts to provide urgent and coordinated support to the population, *calling upon* all parties to the conflict to allow and facilitate, in accordance with relevant provisions of international law and

Please recycle

United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance, the full, safe, and unhindered access of relief personnel, equipment and supplies to all those in need and the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance, in particular to internally displaced persons and refugees, *condemning* all attacks against humanitarian personnel and facilities and *recalling* that attacks against humanitarian personnel and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival may amount to violations of international humanitarian law,

Commending the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Ministerial Group's initiative, as supported by the United Nations and African Union, in establishing a forum for political and security dialogue, and *expecting* all parties to participate in this process and respect the decisions reached by IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 13 March 2014,

Welcoming the IGAD-mediated commitments made to resolve the crisis in South Sudan, namely the 23 January 2014 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement; 9 May 2014 Agreement to Resolve the Crisis in South Sudan; and the 1 February 2015 Areas of Agreement of the Establishment of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGoNU) in the Republic of South Sudan,

Welcoming the resolve indicated in the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government Communiqué of 10 June 2014 and 25 August 2014 that IGAD Member States will take further collective action, including through the imposition of punitive measures, to pressure any party that fails to honour its commitments to date or acts contrary to the Communiqué of that Assembly,

Welcoming the Communiqué of the African Union Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) of 12 June 2014, which, inter alia, reiterated the readiness of that Council, upon recommendation by IGAD, to immediately pursue targeted sanctions and other measures against any party that continues to undermine the search for a solution to the conflict and fails to honour its commitments,

Welcoming further the Communiqué of the AU PSC of 17 September 2014 which, inter alia, reiterated its determination, in coordination with IGAD, to take the necessary measures against any party that fails to honour its commitments and continues to undermine the search for a negotiated solution to the current crisis,

Strongly condemning the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) — in Opposition for failing to reach agreement to form a transitional government within the 60-day period outlined in the 26th Communiqué of 10 June 2014,

Taking note of the Communiqué of the 27th Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa on 25 August 2014, which inter alia: deplored the numerous violations of the agreements signed by the Parties to date, reiterated the need for an inclusive and broad-based approach to negotiations; expressed serious concerns over the worsening humanitarian situation in South Sudan; and called upon the stakeholders to negotiate and complete the agreement on a Transitional Government of National Unity within 45 days,

Taking note of the Communiqué of the 28th Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa on 7 November 2014, which inter alia: resolved that the Government of South Sudan and opposition

forces commit to an unconditional, complete and immediate end to all hostilities; invited collective action by the States of the IGAD region to enact asset freezes and travel bans within the region, and denied the supply of arms and ammunition and any other materiel that could be used in war if the Government of South Sudan and opposition forces commit any violation of the cessation of hostilities; and called on the AU PSC, the United Nations Security Council, and the international community to render all possible assistance in the implementation of these measures, should it be necessary to implement these measures,

Taking note of the 21 January 2015 Agreement on the Reunification of the SPLM, agreed under the aegis of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, and 16 February 2015 Communiqué of the Meeting of the SPLM Tripartite Committee on the Implementation of Phase I of the Arusha SLPM Reunification Agreement,

Taking note of the AU PSC Communiqués dated 5 December 2014 and 29 January 2015 which, inter alia, stressed that sanctions will be imposed against all parties that continue to obstruct the political process and undermine the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement of 23 January 2014,

Welcoming the China-mediated "Five-Point Plan" agreed upon by the representatives of the GRSS and the SPLM/A- in Opposition during the Special Consultation in Support of IGAD-led South Sudan Peace Process convened on 12 January in Khartoum, namely: (i) earnestly commit to the full implementation of all signed agreements; (ii) speed up the pace of negotiations towards the formation of a transitional government at an early date; (iii) take concrete steps to relieve the humanitarian situation in conflict-affected areas, and facilitate access of international humanitarian assistance; (iv) ensure the safety of all personnel and assets of all countries and international entities operating in South Sudan; and (v) provide strong support for and take active part in the IGAD-led mediation efforts, and, in this regard, *strongly urging* both parties to immediately implement the Five-Point Plan,

Expressing its deep appreciation for the actions taken by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) peacekeepers and troop- and police-contributing countries to protect civilians, including foreign nationals, under threat of physical violence and to stabilize the security situation,

Recognizing the importance of independent and public human rights monitoring, investigation and reporting for its useful role in laying the groundwork for justice, accountability, reconciliation and healing among all South Sudanese communities,

Taking note with interest of the 21 February 2014 UNMISS Interim Human Rights report, and 8 May 2014 UNMISS "Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report," and the 19 December 2014 UNMISS "Special Report: Attack on Bentiu, Unity State, 29 October 2014," 29 October 2014 UNMISS "Special Report: Attack on Bentiu, Unity State" and the 9 January 2015 UNMISS Report on "Attacks on Civilians in Bentiu & Bor",

Expressing grave concern that, according to the UNMISS 8 May 2014 "Conflict in South Sudan: A Human Rights Report" there are reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity, including extrajudicial killings, rape and other acts of sexual violence, enforced disappearances, and arbitrary detention have been

committed by both government and opposition forces, and that war crimes have been committed, and, stressing the urgent and imperative need to end impunity in South Sudan and to bring to justice perpetrators of such crimes,

Stressing the importance of accountability, reconciliation, and healing as prominent elements of a transitional agenda while taking note of the important role international investigations, and where appropriate, prosecutions can play with respect to holding those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity,

Recognizing the work of the African Union Commission of Inquiry (AU COI) in investigating and documenting violations as well as abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in South Sudan, *anticipating with interest* its findings and recommendations, *encouraging* the public release of its final report as soon as possible, and *welcoming* the further engagement of the African Union to ensure justice and accountability, as well as healing and reconciliation for South Sudan,

Strongly condemning the use of media to broadcast hate speech and transmit messages instigating sexual violence against a particular ethnic group, which has the potential to play a significant role in promoting mass violence and exacerbating conflict, and *calling on* the Government of the Republic of South Sudan to take appropriate measures to address such activity, and further *urging* all parties to desist from these actions and instead contribute to promoting peace and reconciliation among the communities,

Recognizing the important role played by civil society organizations, faith leaders, women, and youth in South Sudan, *underscoring* the importance of their participation — along with the former SPLM detainees and other political parties — to finding a sustainable solution to the crisis in the country, and *concerned* by efforts by the government to limit such participation including by preventing individuals from travelling to join the talks and by increased restrictions of freedom of expression,

Reaffirming all its relevant resolutions on women, peace, and security, on children and armed conflict, and the protection of civilians in armed conflict, as well as resolutions 1502 (2003) on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, resolution 2150 (2014) on the Prevention and Fight against Genocide, and resolution 2151 (2014) on security sector reform,

Recalling resolutions 1209 (1998) and 2117 (2013) and *expressing grave concern* at the threat to peace and security in South Sudan arising from the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and *emphasizing* the importance of strengthening efforts to combat the illicit circulation of such weapons,

Expressing deep concern at persistent restrictions placed upon the movement and operations of UNMISS, *strongly condemning* the attacks by government and opposition forces and other groups on United Nations and IGAD personnel and facilities, the detentions and kidnappings of United Nations and associated personnel and *calling upon* the Government of South Sudan to complete its investigations of these attacks in a swift and thorough manner and to hold those responsible to account,

Determining that the situation in South Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

Acting under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Endorses* the Cessation of Hostilities Agreements ("CoH Agreements") accepted and signed by the Government of the Republic of South Sudan and SPLM — in Opposition on 23 January 2014, 6 May 2014 and 9 May 2014;

2. *Expresses deep concern* at the failures of both parties to honour their commitments to date, to engage the peace process meaningfully toward political resolution of the crisis and to bring an end to the violence and, in particular, *condemns* the continued and flagrant violations of the CoH Agreements as documented by the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism;

3. *Demands* that the parties respect all aspects of the CoH Agreements and immediately implement the necessary modalities in accordance with the 9 May 2014 Agreement and other relevant Agreements, including the progressive withdrawal of foreign forces deployed in South Sudan since 15 December 2013, *calls upon* all parties to armed conflict in South Sudan to issue clear orders prohibiting all violations of international humanitarian law and human rights violations and abuses, and *underscores* the necessity for all parties to ensure immediate access to humanitarian agencies and further *demands* that the parties commit to finding a comprehensive agreement without further delay;

4. *Reiterates* that there is no military solution to the conflict;

Sanctions Designation Criteria

5. *Underscores* its willingness to impose targeted sanctions in order to support the search for an inclusive and sustainable peace in South Sudan;

6. *Decides* that the provisions of paragraph 9 shall apply to individuals, and that the provisions of paragraph 12 shall apply to individuals and entities, as designated for such measures by the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 16 of this resolution ("the Committee") pursuant to paragraphs 16 (c) and 16 (d), respectively, as responsible for or complicit in, or having engaged in, directly or indirectly, actions or policies that threaten the peace, security or stability of South Sudan;

7. *Underscores* that such actions or policies as described in paragraph 6 above may include, but are not limited to:

(a) Actions or policies that have the purpose or effect of expanding or extending the conflict in South Sudan or obstructing reconciliation or peace talks or processes, including breaches of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement;

(b) Actions or policies that threaten transitional agreements or undermine the political process in South Sudan;

(c) Planning, directing, or committing acts that violate applicable international human rights law or international humanitarian law, or acts that constitute human rights abuses, in South Sudan;

(d) The targeting of civilians, including women and children, through the commission of acts of violence (including killing, maiming, torture, or rape or other

sexual violence), abduction, enforced disappearance, forced displacement, or attacks on schools, hospitals, religious sites, or locations where civilians are seeking refuge, or through conduct that would constitute a serious abuse or violation of human rights or a violation of international humanitarian law;

(e) The use or recruitment of children by armed groups or armed forces in the context of the armed conflict in South Sudan;

(f) The obstruction of the activities of international peacekeeping, diplomatic, or humanitarian missions in South Sudan, including IGAD's Monitoring and Verification Mechanism or of the delivery or distribution of, or access to, humanitarian assistance;

(g) Attacks against United Nations missions, international security presences, or other peacekeeping operations, or humanitarian personnel; or

(h) Acting for or on behalf of, directly or indirectly, an individual or entity designated by the Committee;

8. *Decides* that the provisions of paragraphs 9 and 12 shall apply to individuals, as designated for such measures by the Committee who are leaders of any entity, including any South Sudanese government, opposition, militia, or other group, that has, or whose members have, engaged in any of the activities described in paragraphs 6 and 7 above;

Travel Ban

9. *Decides* that, for an initial period of one year from the date of adoption of this resolution, all Member States shall take the necessary measures to prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of any individuals who may be designated by the Committee, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall oblige a State to refuse its own nationals entry into its territory;

10. *Notes* that designated individuals may have multiple nationalities or passports, *expresses* its concern that travel between the two States of which a designated individual has nationality or a passport may undermine the objectives of the travel ban imposed in paragraph 9, and *requests* that the Panel of Experts established in paragraph 18 of this resolution (the "Panel of Experts") report to the Committee information about such travel;

11. *Decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 9 above shall not apply:

(a) Where the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that such travel is justified on the grounds of humanitarian need, including religious obligation;

(b) Where entry or transit is necessary for the fulfilment of a judicial process;

(c) Where the Committee determines on a case-by-case basis that an exemption would further the objectives of peace and national reconciliation in South Sudan and stability in the region;

Asset Freeze

12. *Decides* that, for an initial period of one year from the date of adoption of this resolution, all Member States shall freeze without delay all funds, other

financial assets and economic resources which are on their territories, which are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by any individuals or entities that may be designated by the Committee, or by any individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or by entities owned or controlled by them, and *decides* further that all Member States shall for this initial period ensure that neither these nor any other funds, financial assets or economic resources are made available, directly or indirectly for such persons' benefit, by their nationals or by persons within their territory;

13. *Decides* that the measures imposed by paragraph 12 above do not apply to funds, other financial assets or economic resources that have been determined by relevant Member States:

(a) To be necessary for basic expenses, including payment for foodstuffs, rent or mortgage, medicines and medical treatment, taxes, insurance premiums, and public utility charges or exclusively for payment of reasonable professional fees and reimbursement of incurred expenses associated with the provision of legal services in accordance with national laws, or fees or service charges, in accordance with national laws, for routine holding or maintenance of frozen funds, other financial assets and economic resources, after notification by the relevant State to the Committee of the intention to authorize, where appropriate, access to such funds, other financial assets or economic resources and in the absence of a negative decision by the Committee within five working days of such notification;

(b) To be necessary for extraordinary expenses, provided that such determination has been notified by the relevant State or Member States to the Committee and has been approved by the Committee;

(c) To be the subject of a judicial, administrative or arbitral lien or judgment, in which case the funds, other financial assets and economic resources may be used to satisfy that lien or judgment provided that the lien or judgment was entered into prior to the date of the present resolution, is not for the benefit of a person designated by the Committee, and has been notified by the relevant State or Member States to the Committee;

14. *Decides* that Member States may permit the addition to the accounts frozen pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 12 above of interest or other earnings due on those accounts or payments due under contracts, agreements or obligations that arose prior to the date on which those accounts became subject to the provisions of this resolution, provided that any such interest, other earnings and payments continue to be subject to these provisions and are frozen;

15. *Decides* that the measures in paragraph 12 above shall not prevent a designated person from making payment due under a contract entered into prior to the listing of such a person, provided that the relevant States have determined that the payment is not directly or indirectly received by a person designated pursuant to paragraph 12 above, and after notification by the relevant States to the Committee of the intention to make or receive such payments or to authorize, where appropriate, the unfreezing of funds, other financial assets or economic resources for this purpose, ten working days prior to such authorization;

Sanctions Committee/Panel of Experts

16. *Decides* to establish, in accordance with rule 28 of its provisional rules of procedure, a Committee of the Security Council consisting of all the members of the Council (herein "the Committee"), to undertake the following tasks:

(a) To monitor implementation of the measures imposed by paragraphs 9 and 12 of this resolution with a view to strengthening, facilitating and improving implementation of these measures by Member States;

(b) To seek and review information regarding those individuals and entities who may be engaging in the acts described in paragraph 6 and 7 above;

(c) To designate individuals subject to the measures imposed by paragraph 9 above and to consider requests for exemptions in accordance with paragraph 11 above;

(d) To designate individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by paragraph 12 above, and to consider requests for exemptions in paragraph 13 above;

(e) To establish such guidelines as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of the measures imposed above;

(f) To report within 60 days to the Security Council on its work and thereafter to report as deemed necessary by the Committee;

(g) To encourage a dialogue between the Committee and interested Member States, in particular those in the region, including by inviting representatives of such States to meet with the Committee to discuss implementation of the measures;

(h) To seek from all States whatever information it may consider useful regarding the actions taken by them to implement effectively the measures imposed; and,

(i) To examine and take appropriate action on information regarding alleged violations or non-compliance with the measures contained in this resolution;

17. *Calls upon* all Member States to report to the Committee ninety days from the adoption of this resolution on the steps they have taken to implement effectively paragraphs 9 and 12 of this resolution;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to create for an initial period, thirteen months from the adoption of this resolution, in consultation with the Committee, a group of up to five experts ("Panel of Experts"), under the direction of the Committee, and to make the necessary financial and security arrangements to support the work of the Panel, *expresses* its intent to consider the renewal of this mandate no later than March 2, 2016, and *decides* that the Panel shall carry out the following tasks:

(a) Assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate as specified in this resolution, including through providing the Committee with information relevant to the potential designation of individuals and entities who may be engaging in the activities described in paragraphs 6 and 7 above;

(b) Gather, examine and analyse information regarding the implementation of the measures decided in this resolution, in particular incidents of

non-compliance, with particular focus on the benchmarks outlined in paragraphs 21 and 22 below;

(c) Gather, examine and analyse information regarding the supply, sale or transfer of arms and related materiel and related military or other assistance, including through illicit trafficking networks, to individuals and entities undermining political processes to reach a final peace agreement or participating in acts that violate international human rights law or international humanitarian law, as applicable;

(d) Provide to the Council, after discussion with the Committee, an interim report by September 1, 2015, a final report by February 1, 2016, and except in the months when these reports are due, updates each month; and,

(e) Assist the Committee in refining and updating information on the list of individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by this resolution, including through the provision of identifying information and additional information for the publicly-available narrative summary of reasons for listing;

19. *Urges* all parties and all Member States, as well as international, regional and subregional organizations to ensure cooperation with the Panel of Experts and *further urges* all Member States involved to ensure the safety of the members of the Panel of Experts and unhindered access, in particular to persons, documents and sites in order for the Panel of Experts to execute its mandate;

20. *Requests* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict to share relevant information with the Committee in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 1960 (2010) and paragraph 9 of resolution 1998 (2011);

Review

21. *Expresses* its intent to review the situation after the IGAD-agreed deadline of March 5, 2015, and again after the envisioned start of the Pre-Transition Period on April 1, 2015, and at 60-day intervals thereafter or more frequently, as needed, and also expresses its intent to impose any sanctions that may then be appropriate to respond to the situation, which may include an arms embargo and the designation of senior individuals responsible for actions or policies that threaten the peace, security or stability of South Sudan, so as to encourage the Government of South Sudan and opposition forces to form a transitional government of national unity, take effective and comprehensive steps to cause forces under direct or indirect control to cease military operations, acts of violence, as well as violations of human rights, and enable full access for humanitarian assistance;

22. *Affirms* also that it shall be prepared to adjust the measures contained in this resolution, including by strengthening through additional measures, as well as modification, suspension or lifting of the measures, as may be needed at any time in light of the progress achieved in the peace, accountability, and reconciliation process, and in light of the implementation of the parties' commitments, including the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and other commitments specified in the preamble of this resolution, and compliance with this resolution;

23. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

United Nations A/69/807–S/2015/154

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
4 March 2015
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 51
Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 2 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information.

Israel has yet again proved persistent in violating all international instruments and international law, particularly international humanitarian law. Only a few days after committing the crime of detaining the Syrian activist Sidqi al-Maqt, it has continued its provocative, repressive and arbitrary policies against our people in the occupied Syrian Golan. On the dawn of 2 March 2015, the Israeli occupation forces detained Sheikh Atif Darwish from the occupied village of Buq'ata and Fida' Majid al-Sha'ir from the occupied village of Majdal Shams, confiscating their personal mobile phones and computers, in yet another violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses once again that the Israeli occupation forces' policy of arbitrary detention is part of a catalogue of Israeli crimes and human rights violations against the Syrian civilian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan stretching back five decades since the occupation of the Syrian Golan.

Syria calls on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Security Council, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and all human rights organizations to bring pressure to bear on Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately and unconditionally release all Syrian detainees in its jails. Syria calls on the Security Council to take the necessary legal measures to enforce its resolutions and ensure that Israel withdraws fully from all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the lines of 4 June 1967.

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I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 51, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations

United Nations S/2015/155

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 March 2015

Original: English

United States of America: draft resolution

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions, including resolutions 825 (1993), 1540 (2004), 1695 (2006), 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009), 1887 (2009), 1928 (2010), 1985 (2011), 2050 (2012), 2087 (2013), 2094 (2013), 2141 (2014) as well as the statements of its President of 6 October 2006 (S/PRST/2006/41), 13 April 2009 (S/PRST/2009/7), and 16 April 2012 (S/PRST/2012/13),

Recalling the creation, pursuant to paragraph 26 of resolution 1874 (2009), of a Panel of Experts, under the direction of the Committee, to carry out the tasks provided for by that paragraph,

Recalling the interim report by the Panel of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 26 of resolution 1874 (2009) and the 23 February 2015 final report (S/2015/131) by the Panel,

Recalling the methodological standards for reports of sanctions monitoring mechanisms contained in the Report of the Informal Working Group of the Security Council on General Issues of Sanctions (S/2006/997),

Welcoming the efforts made by the Secretariat to expand and improve the roster of experts for the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch, bearing in mind the guidance provided by the Note of the President (S/2006/997),

Emphasizing, in that regard, the importance of credible, fact-based, independent assessments, analysis, and recommendations, in accordance with the mandate of the Panel of Experts, as specified in paragraph 26 of resolution 1874 (2009),

Determining that proliferation of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security,

Acting under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Decides* to extend until 5 April 2016 the mandate of the Panel of Experts, as specified in paragraph 26 of resolution 1874 (2009) and modified in paragraph 29 of resolution 2094 (2013), *expresses* its intent to review the mandate and take appropriate action regarding further extension no later than 7 March 2016, and *requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary administrative measures to this effect;

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2. *Requests* the Panel of Experts to provide to the Committee no later than 5 August 2015 a midterm report on its work, and *further requests* that, after a discussion with the Committee, the Panel of Experts submit to the Council its midterm report by 7 September 2015, and *requests* also a final report to the Committee no later than 5 February 2016 with its findings and recommendations, and *further requests* that, after a discussion with the Committee, the Panel of Experts submit to the Council its final report no later than 7 March 2016;

3. *Requests* the Panel of Experts to provide to the Committee a planned program of work no later than thirty days after the Panel's reappointment, *encourages* the Committee to engage in regular discussions about this program of work and to engage regularly with the Panel about its work, and further *requests* the Panel of Experts to provide to the Committee any updates to this program of work;

4. *Expresses* its intent to continue to follow the work of the Panel;

5. *Urges* all States, relevant United Nations bodies and other interested parties, to cooperate fully with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) and the Panel of Experts, in particular by supplying any information at their disposal on the implementation of the measures imposed by resolution 1718 (2006), resolution 1874 (2009), resolution 2087 (2013) and resolution 2094 (2013);

6. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

United Nations S/2015/156

Security Council

Distr.: General
3 March 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 3 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued on 1 March 2015 by a spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army and of a statement released on 2 March 2015 by a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) with regard to the ongoing joint nuclear war games waged by the United States of America and south Korea against the DPRK (see annexes).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council as soon as possible.

(*Signed*) **Ja** Song Nam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-03282 (E) 040315

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Annex I to the letter dated 3 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement issued on 1 March 2015 by a spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army

The Korean People's Army will never remain a passive onlooker to Key Resolve and Foal Eagle

A spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army issued the following statement on Sunday, 1 March 2015:

The US imperialists and south Korean puppet forces decided to kick off adventurous Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises on 2 March despite strong protest and denunciation at home and abroad.

The three services of the US imperialist aggressor forces have already been deployed in south Korea and its vicinity for these war manoeuvres and huge forces of the south Korean puppet army, war servants of their US master, are fully ready for them.

Involved there are the US satellite forces, including the UK, France, Australia and Canada.

Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, which will last until 24 April, are dangerous nuclear war drills for invading the DPRK as they are aimed at swiftly hurling and forward-deploying the US imperialist aggressor forces in contingency on the Korean peninsula, mounting a surprise preemptive attack on it by using "combined forces", "liquidating" the DPRK's headquarters and "occupying Pyongyang".

The gravity of the situation lies in that these war exercises started in the wake of the recent undisguised declaration made by Obama, the chieftain of war of the US imperialists, that it is the policy target of the US to stamp out the ideology chosen by the DPRK and "bring down" its social system.

In a word, Key Resolve and Foal Eagle are an undisguised encroachment upon the sovereignty and dignity of the DPRK and an unpardonable war hysteria of dishonest hostile forces.

In the final analysis, the above-said saber-rattling clearly proves that the claim of the US imperialists and their followers that the war manoeuvres are of a "defensive nature" is a crafty sophism to conceal their reckless, preemptive nuclear attack on the DPRK and their rhetoric about "annual drills" is nothing but a smokescreen to cover up their surprise invasion of the north.

The situation on the Korean peninsula is again inching close to the brink of war.

In view of the prevailing situation, the General Staff of the Korean People's Army clarifies the following principled stand internally and externally:

1. Now that the dangerous war drills of the US imperialists and their followers have been kicked off, our revolutionary armed forces will never remain a passive onlooker to this grave situation.

The DPRK had already declared before the world that, as the Obama group is becoming all the more desperate in its smear campaign against the DPRK, the group is ratcheting up its harsh sanctions and pressure on the DPRK and its war drills against the DPRK are gaining in scope and strength, pursuant to its outrageous hostile policy towards the DPRK, the DPRK will take toughest measures to cope with them.

Key Resolve and Foal Eagle go to prove that the extremely hostile policy of the US towards the DPRK is being implemented through dangerous practical actions.

The Korean People's Army will never overlook the saber-rattling, as its aggressive and offensive nature has been brought to light.

Our revolutionary armed forces never engage in empty talk.

The US imperialists and their allies should bear in mind that all the means of carrying out ground, sea, underwater, air and cyber strikes of our revolutionary armed forces are always aimed at their designated targets and are fully ready to strike them.

2. They should clearly know that our revolutionary armed forces will never allow their slightest intrusion into the DPRK's territory, airspace and waters.

The DPRK had already declared internally and externally its firm determination to bring about earlier the final ruin of the US imperialists and their allies through a conventional Korean-style war if they unleash a conventional war against it, through powerful Korean-style nuclear strikes if they ignite a nuclear war against it and by preeminent Korean-style cyber war if they attempt to "bring it down" by cyber war.

Our powerful revolutionary Paektusan army has bolstered its weaponry to take revenge upon them during the past several decades, to put its pledge into practice.

Those drills are the most undisguised infringement upon the DPRK's sovereignty and dignity and a grave military provocation to it for which there can never be an excuse.

It is the consistent stand of our revolutionary armed forces that should even a single shell drop on any place over which the sovereignty of the DPRK is exercised, it will promptly take counteractions.

3. The US imperialists and their allies should clearly know that the outrageous and vicious aggressive actions being staged by them under the signboard of peace will never work on the DPRK in this bright world.

It is the gangster-like US that claims that Key Resolve and Foal Eagle aim to "conquer" the capital city of the sovereign State and "liquidate" its headquarters while insisting that they are "defensive and "annual" ones.

The US scenario is to make a unipolar world dominated by the US, where US-style democracy and a market economy hold sway.

The evermore undisguised military moves of the US imperialists on the Korean peninsula and in its vicinity, such as Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, are not only targeted at the DPRK.

It is the real intention of the US expanded hostile policy toward the DPRK to lay a vast siege to the continent and let the Far East and the Asian continent allow the US high-handed and arbitrary practices.

The US is seriously mistaken if it thinks such moves will work on the Korean peninsula and the rest of this bright world.

The revolutionary armed forces of the DPRK will further bolster their weapons to annihilate the enemies as the US imperialists become evermore ferocious in their aggressive nature, the south Korean puppet forces escalate confrontation with the fellow countrymen in the north to prolong their remaining days and dishonest hostile forces blindly follow them.

The only means to cope with the aggression and war by the US imperialists and their followers is neither dialogue nor peace. They should be dealt with only by merciless strikes.

The DPRK's revolutionary armed forces will sharply watch, with a high degree of combat alertness, the dangerous saber-rattling of the US imperialists and their followers.

The US imperialist aggressors, the south Korean puppet forces and their followers will have to bitterly regret the irretrievable consequences of Key Resolve and Foal Eagle.

Annex II to the letter dated 3 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement released on 2 March 2015 by a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of the DPRK released the following statement on Monday, 2 March 2015, in connection with the fact that the US started, with the south Korean puppet forces Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, joint military exercises, which are war exercises for invading the DPRK, despite its repeated warnings.

The drills to be staged across south Korea from 2 March to 24 April are said to involve huge US forces in south Korea, the US mainland, Japan and other overseas bases, south Korean puppet forces and massive war means, including a US coastal warship that was manufactured to suit the seabed features off the Korean peninsula.

The exercises are intolerable moves of aggression carried out pursuant to the US-Korea strategy designed to "bring down" the socialist system chosen by the Korean people.

By putting sustained military pressure on the DPRK, the US seeks to prevent it from concentrating efforts on economic construction and the improvement of the people's living standard, and by describing those exercises as "annual" and "defensive" ones, it seeks to have the DPRK become accustomed to its war exercises and grow lax, and then invade the DPRK in the end.

The US launch of the joint military exercises on the Korean peninsula in defiance of the unanimous protest and denunciation by people around it is prompted by a sinister trick pursuant to its Asia-Pacific strategy.

Through the continued joint military exercises, the US intends to keep the south Korean puppet forces, its servants, close to it, stem the north-south relations from advancing and use the puppet forces as cannon fodder for besieging and containing surrounding countries.

At the same time, the US also seeks to keep the situation on the peninsula tense and maintain the pretext for an arms build-up in the Asia-Pacific region.

This year's joint military exercises are of a more provocative nature than ever before.

The DPRK set forth bold and flexible proposals to remove the danger of war, defuse tension and create a peaceful environment on the Korean peninsula this year and has made sincere efforts for their realization.

It clarified that, should the US stop, for the time being, joint military exercises in and around south Korea, we have the willingness to respond with a moratorium on a nuclear test which the US is much concerned about and, as expressed, we are always ready to sit with the US at a negotiating table.

But from the outset of the year, the US president personally declared "additional sanctions" against the DPRK and blustered that it will "bring down" the socialist system which the Korean people regard as dearer than their own lives, and started the aggression war exercises with the south Korean puppet forces against the DPRK, thereby blatantly challenging the sincere proposals and efforts made by the DPRK.

This has only brought to light the nature of the US as the chief culprit escalating tension and harassing peace and the deceptive nature of its hypocritical talk about dialogue.

The exercises have an especially high possibility of causing a spark given the grim situation and atmosphere caused by the US and the south Korean puppet forces' provocative anti-DPRK confrontational frenzy.

Now that the US has become all the more pronounced in its hostile policy toward the DPRK, bereft of reason, the army and people of the DPRK will take tougher counteraction for justice.

As already declared, they are fully ready for any form of war which the US wants and may opt for and are full of the firm will to counter the enemies' slightest provocation with the just great war for national reunification.

In case a war breaks out on the Korean peninsula at last, the US and the south Korean puppet forces can never evade consequences and responsibilities.

United Nations S/2015/157

Security Council

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4 March 2015

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 2180 (2014), the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) until 15 October 2015 and requested that I report on its implementation semi-annually and not later than 45 days before its expiration. The present report covers major developments between the issuance of my report on 29 August 2014 (S/2014/617) and 12 March 2015 and outlines activities undertaken by the Mission in line with its mandate under Council resolutions 1542 (2004), 1608 (2005), 1702 (2006), 1743 (2007), 1780 (2007), 1840 (2008), 1892 (2009), 1908 (2010), 1927 (2010), 1944 (2010), 2012 (2011), 2070 (2012), 2119 (2013) and 2180 (2014). The Council conducted a visit to Haiti from 23 to 25 January 2015.

II. Political developments

2. The reporting period was marked by a failure to hold the long-delayed legislative, municipal and local elections before the end of term of the forty-ninth Legislature, which led to Parliament becoming dysfunctional on 12 January 2015. Since then, the President of Haiti, Michel Joseph Martelly, has relied on the authority granted by the Constitution to ensure the regular functioning of institutions and the continuity of the State. In the lead-up to the 12 January deadline, direct consultations between the President and political stakeholders took place, a presidential advisory commission was established to provide recommendations to break the impasse and a series of agreements was concluded among the three branches of power, as well as between the President and numerous political parties. While ultimately unsuccessful in avoiding an institutional vacuum, the consultations led to the replacement of the Prime Minister and the nine members of the provisional Electoral Council, as well as to the resignation of the President of the Supreme Court. The promulgation by President Martelly of an electoral law on 2 March constituted a critical milestone for the holding of long-awaited elections by the end of this year. During the reporting period, my Special Representative convened the diplomatic community and the international community to coordinate outreach initiatives aimed at encouraging increased dialogue between political actors and building greater consensus among disaffected political interlocutors.

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3. On 22 September, the President initiated a series of consultations with the leaders of both houses of Parliament, the provisional Electoral Council and some political parties to seek consensus on the steps required to ensure the holding of elections by the end of 2014. Party leaders of the strong opposition, however, refused to engage in these discussions and demanded that the President initiate genuine negotiations with all concerned parties instead. On 26 October, in line with an earlier assessment by the provisional Electoral Council, the Office of the President announced the postponement of the polls that had been scheduled for that day.

4. On 1 December, in another effort to resolve the political impasse, the President established an 11-member presidential advisory commission with an eight-day mandate to advise on the most credible solution to the crisis and to open a consensus-based path to long-delayed elections. The commission issued a report recommending a broad range of measures to re-establish trust in the political process and allow for the holding of elections in 2015, while preserving the integrity of state institutions. The measures included the resignations of the Prime Minister, the President of the Supreme Court — who also serves as President of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, and all members of the provisional Electoral Council, to be followed by the formation of a government of consensus and a new electoral council, in the spirit of the 1987 Constitution, with members nominated by civil society groups rather than by the three branches of power.

5. On 12 December, the President agreed to implement the recommended measures. On 14 December, the Prime Minister announced his resignation, followed by all nine members of the provisional Electoral Council and eventually by the President of the Supreme Court, paving the way for negotiations between the President and opposition parties on a consensus government. On 17 December, the President met with five of the six staunch opposition parties for the first time since they had abandoned the inter-Haitian dialogue in February 2014. Their discussions generated consensus on the desired profile of the new head of government and on the sectors that should nominate representatives to a more inclusive electoral council.

6. The President's nomination of Evans Paul, a long-standing member of the opposition, as Prime Minister, on 25 December, followed the earlier nomination of an interim Prime Minister and elicited a new wave of criticism, with opposition parties arguing that the nomination had pre-empted the conclusion of negotiations and threatening to abandon the dialogue process. On 29 December, under the general framework of the presidential advisory commission's recommendations, the heads of the three branches of power signed a tripartite accord with the objective of convening an extraordinary session of the National Assembly to vote on the amendments to the electoral law and a policy statement by the new government, as well as to extend the term of outgoing parliamentarians, thus prolonging the forty-ninth Legislature. Some members of the opposition, however, refused to recognize the departing President of the Supreme Court as a signatory to the agreement. The Senate failed to attain the necessary quorum for the extraordinary session, bringing the forty-ninth Legislature to an end on 12 January 2015.

7. On 11 January, hours before Parliament became dysfunctional, a political accord was concluded between the President and 16 political parties, including four from the staunch opposition. The accord included an agreement to review the designation of the Prime Minister, confirmed that a consensus government would be formed and specified the civil society groups entrusted with nominating members to

the new electoral council. The President was able to continue negotiations with the signatory parties on the basis of this new accord. On 16 January, he addressed the nation confirming his Prime Minister-designate and announcing the formation of a new government within 48 hours. Later that day, the newly appointed Prime Minister took office while the Presidency, within the self-imposed deadline, announced a new government, which was installed on 19 January, comprising 20 ministers and 16 secretaries of State. Some members of the opposition expressed dissatisfaction with the ministerial line-up, which was perceived as dominated by individuals closely associated with the executive. Only six of the 20 posts went to opposition figures, and six previous ministers retained their positions. Three of the ministers in the new government are women. The new government no longer includes a Minister-delegate for human rights and extreme poverty, but now includes a Minister-delegate for elections.

8. With the transition government in place, focus shifted to the establishment of the provisional Electoral Council. Independent institutions from nine sectors of civil society selected one nominee each and submitted their choice to the Presidency. On 23 January, hours before the arrival of the Security Council delegation, the new electoral council, which included three female members, was sworn in. There was a general sense of satisfaction, notwithstanding some lesser complaints. Following the internal election of Pierre-Louis Opont, a renowned electoral expert and former Director General of the body, as its president that same day, the Electoral Council quickly resumed operational activities. On 10 February, the Electoral Council held its first press conference, announcing a tentative calendar for a three-round general election, with polls to be held in July and October 2015, as well as in January 2016. Following a joint review of the draft electoral law, in consultation with political parties and the 10 seated senators, the Electoral Council submitted the draft law to the executive on 21 February, and President Martelly promulgated the electoral law by presidential decree on 2 March.

9. Non-signatory opposition groups have continued to criticize the recent political agreements, including by organizing anti-government demonstrations. Since the nomination of a new Prime Minister and Cabinet, their calls to mobilize and assemble in street protests have had limited resonance, with demonstrations rarely exceeding 1,000 participants. In February, however, calls for general strikes in protest over rising fuel prices have allowed the opposition to increase its mobilization capacity by adding anti-government messages to socioeconomic grievances, which have also included demands for the payment of outstanding salaries for teachers.

10. My Special Representative has conducted her good offices role to promote dialogue among key national stakeholders. She has encouraged national interlocutors to work together to define a modus operandi to enhance confidence in the ongoing political process and mitigate risks associated with the loss of a functioning legislative branch and the resulting institutional imbalance.

III. Security developments

11. The security environment during the reporting period remained generally stable, although an uptick in certain crimes, gang-related violence and public unrest was registered. Increased demands on the Haitian national police for interventions

to control demonstrations diverted resources from other policing activities. Two significant prison breaks occurred in Cap Haïtien on 20 September involving five escapees and in Saint Marc on 30 November involving 34 escapees. Crime statistics for the period from 1 September 2014 to 1 March 2015, collected by the national police and MINUSTAH, indicated a total of 538 reported homicides. In comparison, 499 homicides were registered during the corresponding period from 2013 to 2014 and 536 during the period covered by my previous report. Nearly 80 per cent of homicides, often resulting from gang violence, remained concentrated in the metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, where the rate for 2014 reached 31 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. This is three times the national average of 10.5 per 100,000 inhabitants recorded in 2014, which remains among the lowest in the region and is in line with the United Nations *Global Study on Homicide 2013*. A total of 29 kidnappings was registered, compared to 15 cases during the period covered by my previous report and 14 for the corresponding period from 2013 to 2014. This increase can be partly attributed to the activities of the recent prison escapees, one of whom, a notorious criminal involved in kidnappings, was recently reapprehended and is back in custody. Reported cases of rape totalled 220. This is comparable to the corresponding reporting period from 2013 to 2014, during which 224 reported cases were registered, and an increase compared to the period of my previous report, which saw 156 reported cases.

12. The number of incidents of public protests — with elements of violence ranging from the use of road barricades, destruction of property and throwing of stones, to assaults against police officers and shootings — amounted to 215 recorded events. This figure represents an increase from 166 incidents of unrest during the corresponding period last year and a more significant rise from 117 during the most recent reporting period. The metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince remains the most affected, with 30 per cent of recorded incidents, followed by Petit Goâve with 15 per cent and Fort Liberté with 5 per cent. Protests have generally been small in size. Of the 215 events cited above, an estimated 78 per cent (168 events) involved fewer than 300 persons. Another 14.5 per cent (31 events) ranged from approximately 300 to 1,000 persons. Only 7.5 per cent (16 events) involved more than 1,000 protesters.

13. The performance of the national police in terms of crowd control continued to improve during the reporting period. MINUSTAH supported the national police primarily by providing planning and technical advice for crowd control operations. In the vast majority of incidents involving violent public unrest, the national police was able to respond without operational support from MINUSTAH. In 47 per cent of cases, MINUSTAH pre-positioned formed police units and military capacity in the proximity of planned routes, at the request of the national police. The formed police units and the military were called upon to actively engage in crowd control together with the national police in 68 per cent and 34 per cent of these pre-positioned deployments, respectively. Military-supported crowd control occurred mostly in regions outside of the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, where national police presence is limited, and primarily in Fort Liberté, Caracol and Ouanaminthe (North-East Department); along National Road No. 2 in Petit Goâve and Léogane (West Department); and in Miragôane (Nippes Department).

14. MINUSTAH police and military components also supported the national police to address threats to security and safety, particularly in the market area of Croix des Bossales, Carrefour, Cité Soleil, Simon Pelé and Delmas in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area. Since the beginning of the year, Port-au-Prince has seen

increased gang activity in parts of the metropolitan area, including in Cité Soleil, where rival gangs have engaged in violent confrontations over territorial control.

15. The military component conducted 18,416 routine patrols, of which 1,768 (9 per cent) were conducted as joint patrols with United Nations police and/or the national police as a deterrent to crime and violence. The security situation in the departments from which MINUSTAH has withdrawn (North-West, Grande Anse, South, South-East, Nippes and Centre) remained stable, and operational support by the military component was not required, despite incidents of public protest in these areas accounting for 34 per cent of all protests countrywide.

IV. Rule of law and human rights

16. Some improvements have been noted in this area, particularly in the strengthening of key oversight institutions such as the Superior Council of the Judiciary, the General Inspectorate of the Haitian national police and the Office of the Ombudsman. Efforts have also been made to advance crucial legislative reforms, namely the finalization of the draft penal code. During the reporting period, the Haitian authorities showed significant commitment to engaging with international human rights mechanisms and in tackling allegations of excessive use of force by the national police during protests. At the same time, however, the lack of accountability for past human rights violations and the limited capacity of a national system for human rights protection remained major concerns.

A. Rule of law

17. Working in close collaboration with national and international stakeholders, the national police has improved its capacity and professionalism, notably in the areas of crime prevention and crowd control, in accordance with its 2012-2016 development plan. Less than two years before its completion, 52 per cent of the five-year plan has been accomplished, with 69 out of 70 mandated activities at various stages of execution.

18. With the graduation of the twenty-fifth promotion in January 2015, the strength of the national police reached 11,900 (including 1,022 women, 8.5 per cent of the total) with a police-to-population ratio of 1.14 officers per 1,000 inhabitants. Recruitment for the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh promotions continues. To stay on course and meet the target of 15,000 police officers by the end of 2016, it is imperative that both promotions comprise at least 1,500 cadets.

19. The Government of Haiti confirmed its commitment to further the professionalization of the national police, in close collaboration with the United Nations and bilateral donors, including through political support and advocacy in forums such as the Superior Council of the National Police and the implementation and steering committee that provides strategic and operational guidance, under Haitian leadership, on the implementation of a national police development plan. These mechanisms continued to be further strengthened to ensure coherence in the provision of assistance, the expansion of the geographical coverage of the national police, the enhancement of specialized policing and management capacity and increased budgetary allocation.

20. Efforts to enhance the accountability of the national police and increase public confidence in it, such as the strengthening of the Inspectorate General and the expansion of community outreach, have yielded encouraging results. The conduct of regular and transparent inspections by the Inspectorate General has improved performance and the quality of operations while strengthening internal oversight. The number of police officers vetted with MINUSTAH support increased the ranks of certified national police officers by 1,221, to a total of 7,418, further contributing to the professionalization of the police. The expansion of community policing to nine municipalities in five departments is underpinning efforts aimed at increasing confidence in the police among the population, as is the development of a Haitian community policing model as an integral element of a new crime reduction strategy.

21. Co-location arrangements have facilitated joint national police-United Nations police patrols and manning of checkpoints. Joint activities have also included the deployment of formed police units and individual police officers in support of operations led by the International Organization for Migration in camps for internally displaced persons. MINUSTAH efforts have concentrated on recruitment, crime reduction, police intelligence, management training and strategic planning.

22. With the support of MINUSTAH, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Organization of American States, the Superior Council of the Judiciary agreed to develop a map of the judicial system to assess the proper distribution of judges throughout the country in accordance with the caseload by jurisdiction and evaluations of the performance of judges.

23. MINUSTAH has supported the finalization of the draft penal code by providing technical assistance and acting as the secretariat of the Joint Technical Committee in 39 working sessions since May 2014. Similarly, MINUSTAH is providing assistance to the expert working group drafting the Criminal Procedure Code. The Child Protection Code, prepared with technical assistance by the United Nations Children's Fund and adopted by the Council of Ministers on 20 August, was submitted to Parliament early in September.

24. As part of the model jurisdiction approach to improve the efficiency of the judiciary and reduce prolonged pretrial detentions, MINUSTAH focused its assistance on Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes and Cap Haïtien, providing support to the justice system by facilitating and monitoring dialogue among prosecutors, tribunals and the national police and working with local authorities to develop workplans to handle judicial cases and hold regular hearings. Furthermore, as part of the joint MINUSTAH-UNDP co-location initiative at the Tribunal of First Instance of Port-au-Prince, new software was installed to register cases and manage judicial data.

25. With respect to access to justice, MINUSTAH funded the establishment of two new legal aid offices in North and South departments and provided technical support to the local bar associations to prepare cases to be considered by these new entities. To ensure the sustainability of legal aid offices at the national level, at the request of the Ministry of Justice, MINUSTAH and UNDP have jointly funded an international consultant to support development of a national plan for legal assistance and the drafting of a law on access to justice.

26. The national detainee population, numbering 10,268 as at 3 February, still lives in inhumane and cramped conditions, evidencing the need for effective measures to reduce the number of inmates awaiting trial. MINUSTAH continued to

provide technical support to detention facilities across the country in coordination with bilateral donors, focusing on strengthening the capacity of the Penitentiary Administration Department to address management, security, overcrowding and detention conditions in a more holistic manner. During the reporting period, MINUSTAH assisted the Department in finalizing its strategic development plan for 2014-2016.

27. In pursuit of its programme to reduce community violence, MINUSTAH has concentrated on building social foundations for peace and socioeconomic alternatives for at-risk youth and vulnerable communities, while countering gang dynamics and associated criminal activities. The Mission approved funding for 25 new projects, in Artibonite (3), West (15) and North (7) departments, totalling approximately $4 million, or 50 per cent of the allocated budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year. These projects address legal assistance (2), short-term employment (3), income generation (3), protection of vulnerable groups (1), labour-intensive infrastructure and environmental works (7), public outreach (3), prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (2), raising awareness of political and social issues (3) and vocational training (1). Fifty projects, approved in the 2013-2014 fiscal year, are being carried out in Artibonite (8), North (10) and West (32) departments.

B. Human rights

28. MINUSTAH continued to assist the Office of the Ombudsman by providing on-the-job training to its personnel on human rights reporting and by mentoring its field-based agents. As a relatively new independent institution, however, the Office still lacks the appropriate human and material resources to fulfil its mandate.

29. The reporting period witnessed significant engagement by Haitian stakeholders on human rights reporting. The initial report submitted by Haiti to the Human Rights Committee on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights represented a significant, positive development. The strong participation of the Government's delegation and that of Haitian civil society, along with the submission of additional information by the Office of the Ombudsman, indicated increased engagement with United Nations human rights mechanisms. MINUSTAH provided technical assistance and advice to both government and civil society actors involved in this important process.

30. In December, MINUSTAH released its biannual report on the human rights situation in Haiti. Despite some diverging views between the Government and the Mission, the comments provided by the relevant Haitian authorities and integrated into an annex to the report clearly showed increased government commitment to improving the human rights situation in the country. The early designation of an official responsible for human rights in the newly appointed Government could serve to build upon the steps taken so far.

31. Following the death of Haiti's forty-first President, Jean-Claude Duvalier, on 4 October, both MINUSTAH and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made strong public statements highlighting the importance of continuing the legal proceedings addressing the human rights violations allegedly committed during his dictatorship. On 3 December, the Supreme Court heard a case against the Appeals Court's decision and ordered that the investigation include associates of the late President. A decision by the Supreme Court is pending.

32. In the context of the political stalemate, armed demonstrators, some carrying assault weapons, were observed during anti-government protests. My Special Representative deplored all acts of violence, recalling the need to ensure that the right to peaceful protest be respected and that all offenders be prosecuted. Thirty-eight detainees were released between May and December 2014, following claims that they were in fact political prisoners.

33. On 4 November 2014, MINUSTAH organized an open day on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in collaboration with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, attended by my Special Representative and the Minister for Women's Affairs and Women's Rights. Participants included female journalists and women leaders from across the country, who formulated recommendations in the framework of the Council's 2015 global study and high-level review on resolution 1325 (2000). MINUSTAH continued to advocate for 30 per cent female participation in the political process, and carried out 14 workshops in Artibonite, Centre, North-East and South departments, reaching 919 participants, 90 per cent of whom were women.

34. MINUSTAH worked with the national police to draft training guidelines on child protection and supported the Brigade for the Protection of Minors to assess child protection capacity in the departments of Nippes, South and North-West, where there is a need for specialized judges to be assigned to juvenile courts. On 4 December, the Ministry of Social Affairs, supported by MINUSTAH and other partners, launched the development of a national strategy for child protection to define child protection goals for the next five years.

V. Strengthening State authority

35. MINUSTAH has continued to support governance processes by strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of the Interior, departmental delegations, vice delegations and municipal administrations.

36. MINUSTAH assisted the Ministry of the Interior to implement its national strategy to increase local tax revenue in the four municipalities of Gonaïves (Artibonite), Limbé (North), Les Cayes (South) and Jérémie (Grande Anse). In October, MINUSTAH supported 11 municipalities of South department with skills development for technical and administrative staff.

37. In partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, IOM and the delegation for West Department, the Mission organized training sessions to enhance collaboration among municipalities through joint urban planning, development of public facilities and local tax collection in 20 municipalities of West Department.

38. In preparation for the elections, MINUSTAH provided technical and logistical support for the recruitment and training of the departmental and municipal staff of the provisional Electoral Council and advocated for the application of the 30 per cent female quota in the recruitment process. MINUSTAH, along with UNDP, provided technical assistance to the Council in drafting electoral calendars, budgets and the electoral law. The Mission also supported the civil registration campaign of the National Identification Office. Notwithstanding these advances, the uncertainty resulting from the establishment and replacement of four successive electoral

councils in the previous 24 months delayed capacity-building and the nationalization of electoral management capacity. In February, the newly established Electoral Council reactivated the Technical Commission on Logistics, Security and Nationalization, which could foster decision-making on how to advance these issues.

39. A total of 56 new quick-impact projects were launched, bringing the total for the 2014-2015 fiscal year to 76 projects under implementation throughout the country, with an allocation of $3.3 million (representing 65.9 per cent of the total allocation). Thirty-three projects aim to strengthen State authority in general, while nine projects focus on enhancing the rule of law. Twenty projects are focused on improving water and sanitation systems, mainly in the Central Plateau and in West Department. Four projects address environmental protection (in North and Nippes departments and the Central Plateau) and three aim at enhancing community security through the installation of public lighting in South-East and West departments. During the reporting period, 40 quick-impact projects financed under the 2013-2014 budget were completed.

VI. Update and activities on humanitarian and development needs

40. A recent increase in cholera cases, the continued presence of internally displaced persons and food insecurity remained areas of focus for the Government and the United Nations. The underlying causes of these humanitarian needs, however, are often systemic in nature and require durable solutions, developed and steered by the Government, with longer-term funding support. The exposure of Haiti to environmental hazards such as floods and hurricanes continues to render the population vulnerable to emergencies. Against this background, the United Nations and the Government of Haiti have initiated the development of a transitional appeal for 2015-2016 to address immediate needs and underlying vulnerabilities, while increasing the resilience of households in Haiti. Given the political impasse, significant progress was not made in critical development activities initiated during the previous reporting period (e.g. public finance reform and aid coordination).

A. Humanitarian activities

41. While 2014 saw a 53 per cent decrease in the number of suspected cholera cases from the previous year (during which there were 27,753 suspected cases and 296 fatalities), the number rose during the last quarter, especially in West, North, Artibonite and Centre departments. Heavy rainfall and illegal tapping of public water systems in urban areas are partly responsible for this increase. The metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince was the worst hit, with nearly 9,000 cases. A number of operational challenges remain regarding the integration of cholera response into national structures, compounded by the departure of partners owing to a lack of funding, which has affected treatment capacity (with 250 cholera treatment facilities in 2011 compared to 159 in 2014).

42. Given the recent surge in cholera cases, the newly appointed Government set up an interministerial task force to design an emergency plan and coordinate the response at the technical level. The United Nations and humanitarian partners intensified their response to the epidemic, including through investment in community awareness campaigns, the provision of potable water, the maintenance

and monitoring of water systems and sanitation facilities and medical surveillance and response mechanisms. Following a cholera outbreak in the national penitentiary in Port-au-Prince in October 2014, a vaccination campaign targeting 5,625 people in 16 prisons was conducted by the Government with United Nations and partner support.

43. The High-level Committee on Cholera continued its work during the reporting period, with a focus on finalizing a strategy to support cholera-affected communities and families. The United Nations has advocated for multidisciplinary interventions targeting the most affected areas, in alignment with government-led poverty alleviation programmes. A consensus was reached between the United Nations and the Government of Haiti concerning a joint strategy building on the national sanitation campaign launched in July 2014 during my visit to the country. The campaign has started in 16 priority communes in cholera high-risk areas during the reporting period. The offices of my Special Adviser on Community-based Medicine and my Senior Coordinator for the Cholera Response in Haiti collaborated to track bilateral and multilateral pledges and disbursements towards the 10-year National Plan for the Elimination of Cholera in Haiti. The plan is 18.3 per cent funded; of those funds, 12.9 per cent have been disbursed.

44. As at 30 December 2014, according to the IOM displacement tracking matrix, 79,397 people remain internally displaced in 105 camps. This represents a reduction of 94 per cent of the original 1.5 million displaced persons and a 93 per cent reduction of camps established after the 2010 earthquake. Of the remaining camps, 49 hosting more than 62,600 persons are not targeted by any return or relocation initiatives. Twenty-one camps hosting over 22,800 internally displaced persons are under threat of forced eviction owing to conflict with landowners, and 26 camps hosting some 41,300 individuals are exposed to environmental risks. Sustained rain in North Department in November killed 18 people and displaced 100,000 more. Distribution of aid was organized by humanitarian partners under the coordination of the national Directorate for Civil Protection.

45. With the deactivation of the last four remaining humanitarian cluster mechanisms on 31 December 2014, inter-agency support continued to reinforce State control over sustainable solutions in the key social sectors of health, water, sanitation, education and protection. Efforts to close the remaining camps for internally displaced persons continued by relocating such persons through the provision of rental subsidies or by integrating camps into neighbourhoods through a participatory urban planning process. This action aims to improve urban management of the affected municipalities and facilitate the long-term integration of internally displaced persons.

46. As at 30 December 2014, funding for the humanitarian action plan stood at 51 per cent, although the cholera response remains underfunded. Acknowledging the developmental causes of the humanitarian needs of Haiti, the 2015-2016 transitional appeal will replace the humanitarian action plan.

B. Development activities

47. The International Monetary Fund released the report of its eighth review under the extended credit facility programme. The report points to a 3.5-4 per cent projected growth rate in the gross domestic product for the 2014 fiscal year and

progress in structural reforms. However, high subsidies to sustain the energy sector, lower-than-projected revenues and a reliance on external financing constitute significant risks to economic growth. The report on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals launched by the Government and UNDP showed progress in reaching development targets in most of the eight Goals and is being used as a tool for policymaking.

48. The absence of natural disasters in 2014, combined with a relatively stable economic environment and the coordinated interventions of the Government and its partners, helped stabilize the situation with regard to food security. That situation remains fragile, however, and could rapidly deteriorate in the event of a major natural disaster. To strengthen government capacity to monitor and respond to food insecurity before and in the wake of natural disasters the United Nations worked with the national food security coordination agency on assessments and analyses, and supported the agency in simulation exercises and installing emergency radio communication centres. At present, there are an estimated 3 million food-insecure people, of whom more than 600,000 are severely food insecure. Some 100,000 children under 5 years of age are affected by moderate acute malnutrition.

49. The United Nations country team continued to develop and implement new joint programme initiatives in alignment with the four pillars of the integrated strategic framework for 2013-2016: institutional, territorial, economic and social rebuilding. As at 31 December 2014, the overall disbursement rate of United Nations projects funded by the Haiti Reconstruction Fund was 93 per cent. Only three programmes covered by the Fund are under way, namely "Earthquake prevention in the north" ($10 million), "Support to housing reconstruction" ($30 million), targeting Artibonite, North, West, South and South-East departments, and "Development of the dairy sector" ($2 million).

50. On 23 October, the Haiti-Dominican Republic high-level bilateral commission held its fourth meeting. Discussions during that round of negotiations focused on private investment initiatives in border areas. In order to effectively support the binational process, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, with support from the United Nations, organized a joint retreat in December. However, given domestic preoccupations both in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic and highly publicized events involving Haitians in the Dominican Republic that have triggered demonstrations in Haiti, there is a risk of the process losing momentum.

51. An integrated programme aimed at increasing disaster risk resilience was launched in Grande Anse Department in October 2014, encompassing: risk assessment, community-based disaster preparedness, village savings and loan schemes, minor infrastructure, protection of women and girls, emergency health system reinforcement and agricultural production. The programme provides support to three communes over a period of five years and aims to strengthen the resilience of local populations to the impact of external shocks, in particular natural disasters. The United Nations supported the Haitian authorities in building a social safety net programme, including by developing a national database of vulnerable households.

VII. Update on the consolidation and reconfiguration of the Mission

52. In accordance with Security Council resolution 2180 (2014), the military component plans to reduce its personnel from 5,021 to 2,370 troops, maintaining close-to-current levels through the period of this report. In line with scheduled rotations of some contingents, a right sizing of the military component was carried out in January. As a result, the military component stood at 4,615 as at 18 February 2015. To be able to respond quickly, a fleet reconfiguration is foreseen that includes three MI17 military medium-lift helicopters and two UH-1H helicopters.

53. At the same time, the Mission has continued to work with the Government of Haiti to make progress towards the four jointly agreed stabilization benchmarks of the 2012-2016 consolidation plan. The lingering political crisis, however, diverted attention from the focused pursuit of initiatives underpinning the consolidation process. An update on achievements and challenges is attached to the present report (see annex I). As indicated in my previous report, the Mission has completed the consolidation of logistics support into four regional hubs (Port-au-Prince, Gonaïves, Cap Haïtien and Les Cayes). Planning continued for the 1 July 2015 closure of the Santo Domingo support office, one regional office in Jacmel, five liaison offices (Jérémie, Miragoâne, Port-de-Paix, Fort Liberté and Hinche) and ten of the 38 police co-location sites. A civilian staffing review was carried out in November 2014, the result of which is reflected in my budget submission for the Mission for the financial year 2015/16. Meanwhile, the Mission Support Division is being restructured in line with the global field support strategy and warehousing is being centralized to improve inventory control, service delivery and cost efficiency.

54. A joint United Nations-government steering committee has been established to guide the process of revising the integrated strategic framework. The revisions reflect the Mission's consolidation process, the transition from a humanitarian to a development context, funding trends, and the Government's new poverty alleviation and investment plans. The revision has provided an opportunity to review objectives and indicators and to propose mechanisms for improved reporting and monitoring. It has also allowed MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team to identify specific areas for enhanced collaboration, subject to the availability of additional financial resources.

55. MINUSTAH and the United Nations country team have also embarked on discussions on a transition plan to underpin the gradual reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in Haiti beyond 2016. This includes the impact of transition on the Mission's implementing partners and service delivery of the Government of Haiti alike. It was decided that a conditions-based road map should be developed with the Government of Haiti and the United Nations country team to guide the transition of functions to appropriate partners, if and where needed. To support this process, my Special Representative has established a team to support the development of the transition plan that will include a resource mobilization strategy and will draw on the consolidation benchmarks and the integrated strategic framework to ensure effective harmonization with existing planning frameworks. The next step will involve consultations with the Government to develop an inclusive partnership on transition and responsibly manage the broader implications of the gradual reconfiguration of the United Nations presence in the country. I will provide further updates on progress on transition in my next report to the Security Council.

VIII. Financial aspects

56. By its resolution 68/289, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $500,080,500 for the maintenance of MINUSTAH for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. The proposed budget for the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 has been submitted to the Assembly for its consideration at the second part of the resumed sixty-ninth session. As at 9 February 2015, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for MINUSTAH amounted to $91.0 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at that date amounted to $2,735 million. Also as at 9 February 2015, amounts owed to troop and formed police contributors to MINUSTAH totalled $17.1 million. Reimbursement of troop and contingent-owned equipment costs have been made for the period up to 31 October 2014, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IX. Observations

57. During its visit to Haiti, the Security Council was able to witness the uncertain political situation in Haiti and gauge the challenges still facing the country. The inability to hold long-overdue elections and the absence of a functioning Parliament as at 12 January 2015 are deeply troubling. The implementation of the recommendations of the presidential advisory commission and the agreements reached by the executive and the country's political stakeholders have led to the formation of a new government and the installation of a new provisional Electoral Council. The resulting political alliance is fragile, however. It hinges on the goodwill of the Government and political parties to safeguard the agreements achieved and on the ability of the new provisional Electoral Council to maintain its independence. There are encouraging signs that the political leaders of Haiti have embarked on a positive path. If sustained, it could foster the political consensus necessary for the holding of long-overdue elections and the restoration of a functioning Parliament.

58. My Special Representative in Haiti, together with the international community, has continued to underscore the need for national actors to define a modus operandi, inclusive of the remaining senators and notable personalities from civil society, that enhances confidence in the political process and mitigates the risks associated with the absence of a functioning legislature. I call on all actors to continue engaging in constructive dialogue as a means to end the impasse and move towards elections, thereby ensuring the functioning of all State institutions. I also call on them to exercise restraint, appeal to their constituencies to act responsibly, and work towards minimizing tensions in order to preserve the integrity and credibility of what will be a complex electoral process and the longer-term stability of Haiti.

59. The expeditious engagement demonstrated by the newly established provisional Electoral Council is encouraging. It is critical that the Council perform its functions with full independence and in the utmost transparency. I urge the executive to spare no effort to ensure that adequate funding is provided to fully cover the operational costs of the Electoral Council, as well as resources for electoral security. The work undertaken by the Electoral Council to consult political parties and the remaining senators on the draft legal framework was a commendable effort and an important step leading to the promulgation of the electoral decree by the President of Haiti on 2 March. I also urge the executive to implement the

relevant provisions in the law on the financing of political parties so as to encourage the widest possible participation.

60. The Government of Haiti is likely to face significant challenges in managing security and logistical aspects of the electoral process expected in 2015 and early 2016. These challenges emanate from the fragile political context and the expected complexity of these elections. While the United Nations stands ready to assist, within its means and capabilities, it is imperative that Haitian institutions assume full ownership of the organization and conduct of elections. To this end, I welcome the work initiated by the Electoral Council to assess — through its technical commissions — outstanding needs and identify, with relevant Haitian authorities, how to address them. I encourage the deployment of full-fledged international election observation missions to Haiti, which would allow for scrutiny and inspire greater trust and confidence in the process.

61. The further strengthening of the country's rule of law institutions and the consolidation of their operational independence continue to be essential components of the stabilization process. Recent gains such as the drafting of the penal code, the launching of a vetting process for magistrates, the continued vetting of police officers and the increase in legal aid services are important steps forward. However, slow progress towards accountability and ending impunity continues to be a cause for concern. Widespread, prolonged pretrial detention and the resulting overcrowding of corrections facilities, as well as inhumane detention conditions, are also deeply troubling. I urge the Government, yet again, to strengthen key rule of law institutions and enhance the capacity of the necessary oversight mechanisms.

62. I welcome the increasing capacity and the continued growth of the Haitian national police, which now comprises 11,900 serving officers. I encourage the Government to spare no effort to achieve the minimum target of 15,000 officers by 2016. I commend the leadership of the national police for enhancing the capacity of the Inspectorate General, which is critical for the development of a culture of accountability and internal discipline within the institution. I urge the continued commitment of the Government and international partners to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to enable a greater presence of the national police in the regions and the further strengthening of its administrative and management capacity.

63. The 50 per cent reduction in new cholera cases in 2014 attests to the determination and commitment of the Haitian authorities, the United Nations system and international partners in the continuing effort to eliminate this epidemic. Funding shortfalls, however, have reduced the number of cholera treatment facilities by 36 per cent. It is vital that response mechanisms be maintained and that focus on containing and eventually eliminating this epidemic is sustained, under the Government's leadership. I therefore call on Member States to continue to provide the funds and expertise required for both the immediate and long-term development response.

64. The recent increase in crime, including in the greater metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince, and public unrest, have been well managed thus far by the Haitian police. They are nonetheless a cause for concern given the current period of political uncertainty. The upcoming elections risk further exacerbating the already volatile political environment as MINUSTAH deepens its consolidation. Mindful of the risks posed by the uncertain environment and a possibly protracted electoral period, the Secretariat is seeking to ensure that MINUSTAH remains as mobile as possible. The posture of its uniformed personnel on the ground will be reviewed, as needed, for

maximum visibility within a reconfigured presence. The Secretariat will also make full use of the authorized force levels of 2,601 police, in addition to the 2,370 troops, in order to increase operational assistance to the Haitian authorities in the maintenance of law and order and the provision of security and logistical support during the upcoming elections.

65. In conclusion, I should like to express my sincere gratitude to my Special Representative, Sandra Honoré, for her service in support of Haiti at a time when the country is at a momentous crossroads and the Mission is reconfiguring. I also wish to thank her for the support she provided to the Security Council to ensure that its recent mission to Haiti was productive. I should also like to thank the women and men of MINUSTAH, troop- and police-contributing countries and the United Nations country team and their partners for their continued dedication and commitment to stability and development in Haiti.

Annex I

Progress in the consolidation of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti

1. In my report to the Security Council of 8 March 2013 (S/2013/139), I outlined a conditions-based consolidation plan for MINUSTAH that identifies four stabilization benchmarks that constitute the framework for the consolidation of the Mission. I provide herein an update on the progress made during the reporting period.

Police development

2. In line with the requirement of adding 1,000 new officers per year, the largest-ever cohort of national police officers, with 1,118 cadets (including 113 women), graduated in January 2015, in addition to 10 newly hired women who graduated from a basic police training course in Colombia. This has brought the strength of the police force to approximately 11,900 serving officers (including 1,022 women). The next cohort of approximately 1,500 cadets is anticipated to begin training in April 2015.

3. The National Police School, with 84 instructors (including five women), provides basic training to all newly recruited cadets. In order to augment the capacity of the School to train up to 1,500 cadets in each promotion, the national police force has the capacity to recruit and train the required complement of instructors. At the National Police Academy, which is still funded with donor support, 34 police commissioners (including 16 women) and 41 inspectors (including seven women) undertook a senior manager training programme.

4. The recommended level of one third of national police officers being assigned to the regions beyond the greater metropolitan area of Port-au-Prince has been reached. Of 1,128 recently graduated officers, 734 were deployed to those regions (204 to West Department) and the remaining 394 to the specialized police units.

5. The ability of the national police force to effectively manage its logistics and assets improved, with the addition of 54 new vehicles and motorcycles to the national police vehicle fleet, as well as logistical training in armoury, inventory and workshop management.

6. The specialized training unit focused efforts on training intervention units and on providing continuous training and refresher courses to several specialized police branches. A total of 680 police officers (including 33 women) were trained over the course of the last six months in police tactics, firearms operation as well as in preservation of public order.

7. The national police budget for 2014 to 2015 was adopted by the Government of Haiti, with a final figure of $148,215,360.95, a 14.35 per cent increase over the previous year's budget. The Minister of Justice and Public Security has officially requested a supplementary budget owing to a 19 per cent shortfall in the approved budget.

Electoral capacity-building

8. Legislative, local and municipal elections did not take place in 2014, in breach of constitutional timelines. The provisional Electoral Council has suggested a

tentative calendar for legislative, municipal and presidential elections to take place between July 2015 and January 2016 and invited discussion by political parties.

9. A number of preparatory activities were undertaken by the provisional Electoral Council, including recruitment in October and November 2014 of technical directors for logistics, operations and communications. The 11 departmental and 142 municipal electoral offices were also staffed in late 2014.

10. Following the appointment on 23 January 2015 of the new provisional Electoral Council in the spirit of article 289 of the Constitution, work began on the review of the electoral law, the installation of the departmental and municipal electoral offices and an electoral calendar. In accordance with article 192 of the amended Constitution, a permanent Electoral Council can only be appointed once the National Assembly is in place.

11. The Government of Haiti has contributed $13.5 million to the basket fund of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the upcoming elections, an increase from the $7 million contributed in 2010-2011.

12. Discussions on the assumption by the Haitian State of increased responsibility for electoral security and logistics have resumed under the new provisional Electoral Council, after having been stalled following the establishment and replacement of four electoral councils over the course of 24 months.

Rule of law and human rights

13. The Superior Council of the Judiciary continued to strengthen its capacity and staffing through the launch of a vetting process for the Director of the Judicial Inspectorate and ten inspectors. In September 2014, the Council also began a vetting process for magistrates. While the Council has had a State-funded budget since 2013, the amendments to the current budget for the financial period from October 2014 to September 2015 remain unapproved.

14. Preliminary steps were taken to strengthen the capacity of the Superior Court of Auditors and Administrative Disputes with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between UNDP and the Court in September 2014. The memorandum establishes a protocol whereby UNDP agreed to help the Court to publish its annual review of public expenditures and inventory of public assets, to undertake an institutional diagnostic review of needs and to strengthen staff capacities. This protocol sets the stage for anticipated future UNDP support to the Court.

15. The operational capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman to carry out its mandate has improved. The capacity of its research and systemic investigations unit was reinforced notably through on-the-job training in the reporting of human rights violations and the mentoring of field-based agents with support from MINUSTAH.

16. The vetting of 2,365 national police officers, completed in January with support from MINUSTAH, brought the certified number of currently serving or discharged national police officers to 7,418.

17. The conduct of 27 inspections in the departments and 84 day/night supervisory visits in the metropolitan area by the Inspectorate General of the Haitian national police has significantly contributed to the improvement of operations and oversight. The effective collocation within six divisions increased the quality and the number of investigative reports sent to the Director General of the national police by the

General Inspector-in-Chief, resulting in the dismissal of 796 police officers, including 717 for abandoning their posts between 1997 and 2014 and 79 who recently committed serious human rights violations.

18. A draft penal code was completed in November 2014. It is expected to be submitted for consideration by the next Legislature.

Key governance issues

19. My Special Representative engaged with national stakeholders to promote dialogue in the context of the negotiations, leading to the conclusion of a tripartite agreement on 29 December 2014 and a political accord on 11 January 2015. She also cooperated closely with the international partners of Haiti to coordinate the international community's good offices efforts.

20. The ability of municipal and departmental authorities to implement basic administrative and financial procedures improved, particularly in the areas of: (a) recruitment and accreditation of staff, including that of 42 municipal officials in 11 municipalities of South Department; (b) development of departmental and municipal action plans in 14 vice-delegations and 24 municipalities; (c) training and capacity-building of local authorities in urban planning, the development of public amenities and the implementation of local tax collection projects, including the training of 45 delegation staff and 90 municipal administrative staff (including 11 women).

21. While national stakeholders have debated the timing and modalities of further constitutional reform, no formal steps towards reforms have been taken thus far.

Annex II

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: composition and strength of the police (as at 25 February 2015)

	Number of United Nations police		*Number of formed police units*	
Country	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*
Argentina	2	19	0	0
Bangladesh	0	5	84	196
Benin	1	41	0	0
Brazil	0	16	0	0
Burkina Faso	3	42	0	0
Burundi	1	15	0	0
Cameroon	1	5	0	0
Canada	13	44	0	0
Chad	0	7	0	0
Chile	4	7	0	0
Colombia	1	21	0	0
Côte d'Ivoire	5	50	0	0
Croatia	0	1	0	0
France	2	16	0	0
Grenada	0	2	0	0
Guinea	0	14	0	0
India	0	0	0	420
Jamaica	0	2	0	0
Jordan	0	15	0	308
Kyrgyzstan	0	1	0	0
Madagascar	1	1	0	0
Mali	3	36	0	0
Nepal	1	10	11	129
Niger	0	15	0	0
Nigeria	1	2	0	0
Norway	3	3	0	0
Pakistan	0	0	1	138
Philippines	1	14	0	0
Portugal	0	0	0	0
Romania	3	17	0	0
Russian Federation	0	5	0	0
Rwanda	0	5	17	123
Senegal	0	10	11	129
Serbia	0	4	0	0
Spain	0	4	0	0

	Number of United Nations police		*Number of formed police units*	
Country	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*
Sri Lanka	2	5	0	0
Tunisia	1	10	0	0
Turkey	0	18	0	0
United States of America	7	61	0	0
Uruguay	0	3	0	0
Vanuatu	0	2	0	0
Yemen	0	24	0	0
	56	572	124	1 443
Total	**628**		**1 567**	
		2 195		

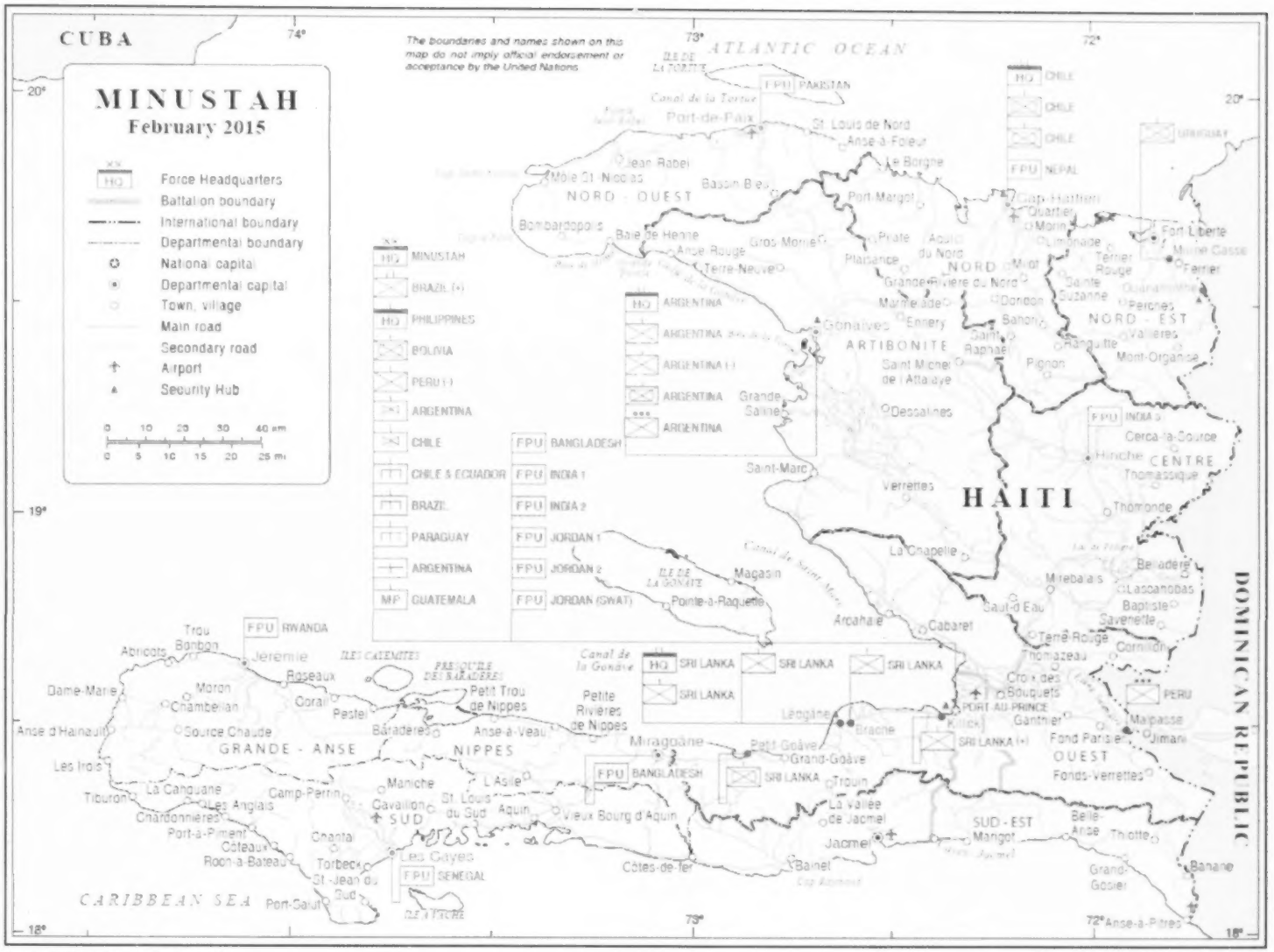
Annex III

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: countries providing military staff and contingents (as at 18 February 2015)

	Staff officers		*Troops*		
Country	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*
Argentina		7	37	522	566
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)		1	20	185	206
Brazil		19	18	1 327	1 364[a]
Canada	1	4		2	7
Chile		5	20	387	412
Ecuador		1		52	53
El Salvador				34	34
Guatemala		5	9	124	138
Honduras				37	37
Indonesia		2			2
Jordan		6			6
Nepal		13			13
Paraguay		3	5	108	116
Peru		5	24	342	371
Philippines		2	9	148	159
Sri Lanka		13		849	862
United States of America		9			9
Uruguay		10	13	237	260
Total	**1**	**105**	**155**	**4 354**	**4 615**

[a] The Force Commander is employed on a United Nations contract and hence is not reflected in the troop strength.

Annex IV



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